

LANCASHIRE COMBINED FIRE AUTHORITY

PLANNING COMMITTEE

Monday, 18 July 2022, at 10.00 am in the Main Conference Room, Service Headquarters, Fulwood.

MINUTES

PRESENT:

Councillors

S Clarke (Chair)
J Singleton (Vice-Chair)
N Hennessy
F Jackson
D O'Toole
S Rigby
J Shedwick
T Williams

Officers

S Healey, Deputy Chief Fire Officer (LFRS)
T Powell, Group Manager, Corporate Programme and Intelligence (LFRS)
C West, Station Manager, Corporate Programme and Intelligence (LFRS)
S Collinson, Head of Media and Communications (LFRS)
D Brooks, Principal Member Services Officer (LFRS)
L Barr, Member Services Officer (LFRS)

In attendance

K Wilkie, Fire Brigades Union

1/22 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Jane Hugo and County Councillor Munsif Dad.

2/22 DISCLOSURE OF PECUNIARY AND NON-PECUNIARY INTERESTS

None received.

3/22 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

RESOLVED: - That the Minutes of the last meeting held on the 7 February 2022 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

ANNUAL SERVICE REPORT

The Deputy Chief Fire Officer presented the report. The Annual Service Report (ASR) was produced annually by the Service as part of its accountability to measure progress against the items set out as deliverables as part of the Annual Service Plan which were derived from the Community Risk Management Plan.

It was noted that during the previous year the Service adapted to delivering services alongside supporting the ongoing response to the Covid-19 pandemic in Lancashire; proud to continue playing a central role, working as one team with partner agencies in the Lancashire Resilience Forum. After helping to establish vaccination centres in the previous year, in 2021-22 the Service continued to support local NHS services to deliver the vaccination programme. This included helping to deliver booster jabs to protect people against the Omicron variant during Christmas and New Year. Over the course of the pandemic, the Service helped to deliver approximately 500,000 vaccinations, with around 125,000 vaccines administered by Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service (LFRS) staff. Continued support would be provided to Lancashire's recovery from the pandemic for as long as was needed. This vital work was carried out alongside an increase in regular activity compared to the first year of the pandemic. Last year the Service attended almost 19,000 emergency incidents (an increase of around 10%) and conducted over 17,600 home fire safety checks (an increase of over 30%).

Despite challenging circumstances, both frontline and support staff maintained the highest standards while responding to emergencies and delivering services that keep communities in Lancashire safe. In 2021-22 several important areas of work were progressed that would ensure the Service was in a strong position to respond to changing risks in Lancashire, in particular climate change emergencies and extensive reform to business fire safety. Numerous significant and complex emergencies were also responded to throughout the year which had been conducted with exceptional skill and professionalism.

The Annual Service Report as now considered by Members, reviewed progress through the 2021 – 2022 reporting year and highlighted a number of key deliverables against the priority areas of: people, prevention, protection, response and value for money related work streams:

Our year in numbers

The Deputy Chief Fire Officer advised that the report included a summary table of the Service's performance:

Incidents attended	18,932
Average attendance time	7 min 56 seconds
Fires attended	5,372
Accidental dwelling fires (ADFs)	845
People lost their lives in ADFs	6
Casualties from ADFs	40

ADFs with a low or medium fire severity	94.2%
On-call fire engines available to respond to incidents	79.1%
Missing person searches (supporting other emergency services)	33
Gaining entry to property incidents (supporting other emergency services)	761
Road traffic collisions attended	721
On-call firefighters recruited	50
Home Fire Safety Checks delivered	17,632
Children and young people received prevention education	66,141
People took part in road safety education	13,704
Fire safety enforcement notices issued	102
Businesses prohibited from operating	16

Preventing fires and other emergencies from happening and protecting people and property when they do

Review of the Home Fire Safety Check referral pathway

This project involved working with partners to ensure the Home Fire Safety Check (HFSC) continued to target prevention activity at the most vulnerable people and properties in Lancashire. Following review and feedback from partners, the quality and management of HFSC referrals had been improved through improved communication and establishing a seamless process when unable to contact someone who has been referred through the service. The extensive partnership work that has been carried out culminated this year in the introduction of new ways of working for community safety and operational staff.

Embed Adverse Childhood Experience awareness

Awareness of the impact of traumatic experiences in childhood on behaviour had been embedded across the Service through toolbox talks, e-learning and as part of new recruits' training with the aim of delivering more informed and effective community fire safety and youth engagement activity. It was intended to build on this foundation as through the introduction of trauma informed practice.

Built Environment Assessment Team

Established to address the evolving risks posed by an increasingly complex built environment and the potential for buildings to perform unexpectedly in a fire, the team had increased knowledge and understanding of buildings in Lancashire with core services across prevention, protection and operational response strengthened and improved as a result of its recommendations. How staff are trained to assess risk in the built environment now drew on refreshed guidance which reflected national learning from significant incidents. Bespoke guidance had been provided to firefighters to support safe and effective response activities and operational crews were now delivering business fire safety checks. The role of Built Environment Risk Managers had been established and the Service would soon be recruiting. Responsibilities included accelerating organisational

knowledge, understanding and competence in this area.

Responding to fires and other emergencies quickly and competently

Strengthen operational assurance

The assurance monitoring system (AMS) was sector-leading software developed in Lancashire. It had improved the way data was analysed and trends identified and it applied learning from exercises and incidents, including national learning. For example, the system was used to track progress against the Grenfell Tower Inquiry action plan. Information from the debrief app, which captured learning from incidents and exercises, was automatically transferred to the AMS and analysed to inform improvements in how the Service planned, prepared for and responded to emergencies.

Respond to the impacts of climate change

The Service continued to adapt and invest in understanding and mitigating climate change emergencies in the county. A new climate change operational response plan had been launched, which identified the increasing impacts and consequences of climate change in terms of both prevalence and duration of large-scale flooding and wildfire events. As part of that plan investment had been made in two new Hagglund vehicles which helped the Service to respond more efficiently and effectively to fires and flooding incidents that occurred in difficult to access locations. This investment had expanded the developing wildfire and flood rescue response capabilities. Every firefighter in the Service already had a bespoke flood suit and this year they would receive specialist personal protective equipment for fighting wildfires, making Lancashire the first Fire and Rescue Service in the UK to have wildfire kit for all frontline responders.

Optimise rota management

Following a trial in 2020-21 to introduce several new processes designed to make detachment and overtime planning more efficient, the Service had further reviewed and updated its ways of working.

The staffing management app continued to be developed to ensure optimum staffing levels were maintained across a number of wholetime and on-call duty systems in a more efficient way. The latest developments included broadening access to the app for on-call firefighters.

Replace incident command units and software

Incident command units were critical to how complex or large-scale incidents were managed. The Service had produced and tested a specification for new vehicles that would lead to more effective incident management in the future, which included new software that would enable the sharing of information safely and efficiently across the incident ground. A contract for two new command units had been awarded with arrival into the Service expected in 2023-24.

Evaluate tools to strengthen our response

Designed to reduce incident response times, during 2020-21, and following a trial, the Service expanded a pre-alerting system to wholetime and on-call fire stations. The system provides early mobilisation messages which have

improved average reaction times to incidents across all duty systems. Pre-alerting has been implemented across fire stations and continues to be refined based on feedback from operational crews. Research into a software system that provided dynamic cover data had been concluded with plans to introduce this during 2022-23 to help ensure resources were available in the right place, at the right time.

Valuing our People so they can focus on making Lancashire safer

Develop a strong organisational culture based on values and wellbeing

A programme of work to continue developing an organisational culture that promotes a healthy state of wellbeing and truly represents the Service's STRIVE values: service, trust, respect, integrity, valued and empowerment.

- Supervisory and middle managers continued to progress their development through the Institute of Leadership and Management at levels 3 and 5.
- Promotion pathways had been reviewed and implemented creating opportunities for talented individuals to progress more quickly via a talent gateway assessment. This also allowed on-call incident commanders the opportunity to be considered for whole-time supervisory manager roles where they met the essential requirements.
- During 2021-22 the Service introduced a team of wellbeing support dogs to its health and wellbeing services. Six members of staff and their dogs received training to be able to assist in improving wellbeing, de-stressing after demanding incidents and providing peer support and signposting. The Service's health and wellbeing work had been recognised in the Oscar Kilo awards, run by the National Police Wellbeing Service; being awarded runner up in the personal resilience category for workplace wellbeing toolbox talks. These talks continued to share awareness of mental health, provide support information and offered wellbeing tips across the whole Service. Collaboration with the Fire Fighters Charity continued to expand the range of workshops available with a focus on personal resilience and the importance of maintaining good physical health to support mental health and wellbeing.

Promote equality, diversity, and inclusion within the Service

Recruiting, developing and retaining a workforce inclusive and more reflective of Lancashire's communities was central to serving our communities as effectively as possible.

- A series of engagement activities within Lancashire's minority communities took place prior to 'have a go' recruitment events at community venues across the county, aimed at appealing to a diverse range of talent. The events were an opportunity for people to find out more about a career with Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service and encourage them to apply when recruitment opened.
- A trial of flexible annual leave arrangements at Blackpool and South Shore fire stations was extended for another year to allow further learning, due to the impact of Covid-19 on staffing levels at the time. Further evaluation would

- be carried out once complete to consider the effectiveness of the trial.
- A Ramadan safety campaign was launched at Preston Muslim Forum and the Service participated in the 'I'm not a Muslim but I will fast (for one day)' initiative with One Voice Blackburn. Members of staff fasted for one day to support Muslim colleagues and community members.
 - Focus groups were held with fire cadets and college students to gather insight to inform fire safety campaigns targeted at young people.
 - The Service had continued to attend Pride events across Lancashire and engage with the LGBTQ+ community to show its support, break down barriers and create positive relationships with the communities it serves. Working collaboratively with other fire and rescue services as well as public sector organisations such as Lancashire Constabulary to maximise engagement opportunities.

Upgrade fire station accommodation

Following completion of work at South Shore fire station to improve accommodation and facilities, a contractor had been appointed to upgrade accommodation at Hyndburn. Investment in fire stations was part of the commitment of ensuring staff have the best facilities to support their health and wellbeing and provide a positive working environment.

Delivering Value for Money in how we use our resources

Invest in training and equipment

Investment in a programme of significant, long-term improvements continued to ensure that staff had the best equipment and training available to deliver effective services now and in the future.

- Following £4m capital investment, construction work to expand the existing fleet garage and provide a purposely designed breathing apparatus training school and welfare facilities (ie: pre and post breathing apparatus wear / decontamination services) at the training centre in Chorley was complete and both were in full use by staff.
- Following a review of drill tower provision across the Service, a medium to long term replacement plan based on specialist skills and the condition of existing facilities was being implemented.
- Last year work to rationalise on-vehicle technology and consider integrated vehicle systems was undertaken as part of plans to introduce CCTV on fire appliances. Installation of CCTV was now underway with a view to improving driver training and reducing the amount of time taken to investigate driving incidents.

Collaborate with other public services

Covid-19 caused plans through the Blue Light Collaboration Board to be placed on hold but presented new ways for the Service to diversify and work with partners to support the pandemic response in Lancashire.

Our people volunteered to provide essential services: delivered interventions

and welfare checks to Lancashire's most vulnerable residents; trained to handle mass casualties and support temporary morgues; coordinated the distribution of personal protection equipment (PPE) supplies to health care settings; and fitted P3 face masks for hospital and social care workers.

The Blue Light Collaboration Board was re-established after being paused during the Covid-19 pandemic. A new strategic statement of intent had been produced setting out objectives for Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service, Lancashire Constabulary and North West Ambulance Service.

Collaboration work with Lancashire Constabulary was underway to prepare for the introduction of a new standard in relation to fire scene investigation for organisations that investigated fires as part of the criminal justice setting. This included fire and rescue services carrying out investigations as part of multi-agency teams.

Replace performance and analysis software

Work had progressed to replace the software (using Microsoft 365 Power BI) to research, analyse and report information relating to incident trends, prevention data and performance. As part of the digital transformation programme, the Service were developing a data warehouse and creating a system fit for future needs. In a phased approach, the project would enable more effective monitoring and reporting of a wide range of key performance indicators.

Making Lancashire Safer

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

Supporting communities during the coronavirus pandemic

Since the pandemic began in 2020, the Service had played a central role in the response, working as one team alongside partner agencies in the Lancashire Resilience Forum. This included delivering essential services from visiting vulnerable residents to carry out interventions and welfare checks to coordinating distribution of personal protective equipment (PPE) supplies to health and social care settings. The Service later turned its attention to supporting local NHS services to establish vaccination centres, providing site management, marshalling, administration and logistics support to mass vaccination venues and community sites. Firefighters and support staff were also trained to administer vaccines directly to patients.

In December 2021, the Service once again supported local NHS services with the Covid-19 vaccination programme, administering booster jabs over Christmas and New Year. Over the course of the pandemic, the Service had helped to deliver approximately 500,000 vaccinations, with around 125,000 vaccines administered by staff. 328 volunteers supported the vaccination programme at 25 sites across Lancashire, including five mass vaccination sites.

Transforming protection services in response to fire safety reform

Extensive reform to fire safety and building control standards was underway to make buildings safer for occupants following the tragic Grenfell Tower fire. Building on the recommendations from work carried out by the built environment assessment team, the Grenfell Tower Inquiry action plan and significant changes in fire safety legislation, the past year had seen substantial changes in the way businesses were assisted to reduce fire risk in their buildings, keep people safe and comply with legislation. Protection services had been restructured to include a protection transformation team and a new built environment and operational liaison team.

The protection transformation team had expanded the ability of the Service to assure the standard of fire precautions in smaller and lower risk premises through the introduction of business fire safety checks (BFSC) undertaken by operational crews. The process was underpinned by a state-of-the-art premises allocation portal and an app on a mobile device, which ensured the check could be undertaken with minimal disruption to the business and relevant fire safety advice was automatically sent by e-mail following completion. Premises which were found to be seriously non-compliant were referred to dedicated fire safety inspection teams.

Historically, the Service had been called out around 2,000 times every year by automatic fire alarms (AFAs) or by people dialling 999 reporting that an alarm was sounding in premises (with no sleeping risk) during the day. Over 99.5% of these calls were subsequently found to be false alarms when fire engines arrived. In light of the risk this created by unnecessary blue light mobilisations and reduced emergency vehicle availability, how the Service respond to these alarms had changed.

Community safety work with young people

Virtual delivery of prevention education in schools was used successfully throughout the pandemic as an alternative to in-person visits and by the end of the 2021 academic year, nearly 6,000 pupils had received the Year 6 Road Sense package prior to moving onto secondary school.

In September 2021 in-person delivery of education packages in all schools in Lancashire resumed to seek to catch up with primary school students who missed a year during the pandemic. All primary schools in Lancashire would have been offered Childsafe and Road Sense packages by the end of the 2021-22 academic year.

Fire cadet units restarted at six fire stations after the pandemic forced the units to pause. The cadet programme provided support and opportunities for young people aged 13 to 17 alongside the opportunity to achieve some valuable qualifications. Seventy cadets were enrolled in the year.

The Prince's Trust programmes ran throughout the pandemic with teaching methods adapted to ensure they could continue. The Service celebrated 20 years of delivering The Prince's Trust last year and were incredibly proud of the programmes which ran in nine areas across Lancashire.

Leading nationally on the use of drones

Last year the Service expanded its drone team to include more pilots who worked an on-call system, which strengthened resilience in relation to aerial capabilities. The use of drones had transformed the way fires were fought by providing incident commanders with aerial intelligence, including infra-red capability to identify fires burning within a structure or underground. The partnership with Lancashire Constabulary had also resulted in drones being used in missing people searches and at public events.

As the national drone lead for both police and fire and rescue services, the team maintained strong focus on innovation and introduced new state-of-the-art equipment in 2021-22. This included four new drones with advanced search and artificial intelligence capabilities; a new remotely operated vehicle that was being trialled for underwater rescues; and advanced software which allowed the team to create aerial maps of large-scale incidents such as wildfires and floods in near real time.

Significant Incidents

The report also included a number of significant incidents which included: details of 2 explosions, a commercial building fire, a bridge collapse and weather-related incidents (strong winds, flooding, wildfire).

County Councillor O'Toole acknowledged the work of the Service during the pandemic, the use of the drone capability and the work done to promote equality, diversity and inclusion within the Service which was evident at an open day he had attended recently at Preston Fire Station.

County Councillor Shedwick echoed his support for an excellent report and added the importance of the continued development of software to capture data.

County Councillor S Rigby referred to the summary table of the Service performance (as detailed on page 16 of the agenda pack) and queried whether data could be broken down for each district. In response, the Deputy Chief Fire Officer advised that the Service did produce local plans for each fire station and the Service was looking at how it could strengthen the amount of data available on the website.

County Councillor Hennessy queried whether the data collected from the performance and analysis software would be presented to the Resources Committee. In response, the Deputy Chief Fire Officer advised that many Services used Microsoft 365 Power BI which allowed software to delve into different parts of the Service (ie: on-call availability, community risk home fire safety and incidents). It then connected the data into dashboards setting out performance. Some Services allowed this to be external and internal facing. Working with Microsoft, the Service was in the process of developing the software. The focus was to replace the software currently used to generate quarterly monitoring reports presented to the Performance Committee but it could be shaped to capture data used for other things (ie: internal resources information or external data requests from Her Majesty's Inspectorate).

In response to a further question from County Councillor Hennessy regarding analysis of social media activity, the Deputy Chief Fire Officer confirmed that colleagues in corporate communications produced a monthly analysis across the different social media platforms which captured successes and allowed the Service to track likes across themes. The Service also worked with the National Fire Chiefs Council prevention programme to support awareness of national campaigns. County Councillor Hennessy considered it would be useful if this engagement was reported to the Performance Committee.

In response to a question raised by County Councillor Singleton regarding plans for the Service to be included in the forthcoming vaccination booster programme, the Deputy Chief Fire Officer advised that health colleagues were looking at whether the Service would be involved or not via the Lancashire Resilience Forum.

RESOLVED: - That the report be noted and endorsed.

5/22

BUSINESS CONTINUITY PLAN AND TESTING

The Deputy Chief Fire Officer presented the report.

In line with the Business Continuity Policy (BCP), Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service was required to test Business Continuity Plans annually. The Service test was usually scheduled towards the end of the year once all the plans have been updated and reviewed. The 2022/2023 test was being planned in detail and programmed to be held in November 2022 to coincide with a Lancashire-wide, multi-agency exercise in Blackpool. Meanwhile, an exercise to test station BCPs was also being developed and would be executed before the end of the year.

In order to provide co-ordination for ongoing operations review and continuous development of business continuity, the Service created and filled the role of Business Continuity and Emergency Planning Officer in April 2022. Therefore, the Service would be looking to develop and implement a Business Continuity Management System that aligned both to the Business Continuity Institute's Good Practice Guidelines as well as to the Business Continuity ISO 22301 standard.

In addition, the Service would debrief the BCP activation for covid-19 thoroughly in conjunction with Lancashire Resilience Forum (LRF) partners; which would be a significant undertaking. It was expected that a number of areas of good practice would be identified and there would be opportunities for improvements to be made within the Service business continuity plans. These would be identified via the internal debrief process, combined with the multi-agency debrief capability through the LRF.

County Councillor Hennessy queried whether there would be any Member involvement in the test due to be held in November. In response the Deputy Chief Fire Officer advised that in any major incident there was a role for Member

engagement and he would keep Members updated.

County Councillor O'Toole acknowledged the forward thinking shown by the LRF partners to deliver what was achieved during the pandemic.

In addition, given the business risk implications (as detailed on page 30 of the agenda pack) County Councillor O'Toole queried whether the Service held senior multi-agency business contingency planning meetings. In response, the Deputy Chief Fire Officer advised that LRF meetings were held at executive level bi-annually with several sub-group meetings taking place. It was the responsibility of the LRF under the Civil Contingency Act 2004 to ensure preparedness. He advised that during a pandemic the response was led by the Police with relevant partners which included a joint regional liaison officer who was a member of the armed forces.

RESOLVED: - That the Committee

- i) accepted the arrangements for Business Continuity Policy exercises in 2022/23; and
- ii) supported strengthening resilience through the development and implementation of a Business Continuity Management System.

6/22 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Committee would be held on 21 November 2022 at 1000 hours in the main Conference Room at Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service Headquarters, Fulwood.

Further meeting dates were noted for 6 February 2023 and agreed for 17 July 2023.

7/22 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

RESOLVED: - That the press and members of the public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following items of business on the grounds that there would be a likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in the appropriate paragraph of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972, indicated under the heading to the item.

8/22 THE EMERGENCY COVER REVIEW 2022

An Emergency Cover Review (ECR) was conducted by the Authority periodically and involved a strategic review of fire and rescue service emergency response across the county. It considered the fire engines, fire stations and associated staffing arrangements which collectively represented the front-line response, making recommendations for change, as appropriate.

In line with the requirements of the Fire and Rescue Service National Framework, a comprehensive consultation exercise needed to be conducted on any proposed changes affecting the delivery of services to communities.

Options for change were considered and it was

RESOLVED: - That

- i) a full 12-week consultation be launched during week commencing 18 July 2022 on the ECR option which would maintain all 39 fire stations and 58 fire engines across the county and have minimal impact on frontline prevention, protection and response arrangements;
- ii) the impact of the ECR would be reduced by phasing out a number of Day Crewing Plus stations in line with the retirement profile;
- iii) a separate letter be written to Chief Executives of the 14 local authorities encouraging a response to the consultation;
- iv) the outcome of the consultation to be reported to the next meeting of the Planning Committee in November 2022.

M NOLAN
Clerk to CFA

LFRS HQ
Fulwood