

Lancashire Combined Fire Authority

Monday, 19 December 2022 at 10.00 am in Washington Hall, Service Training Centre, Euxton

MINUTES

PRESENT:

D O'Toole (Chair)

Councillors

J Shedwick (Vice-Chair)

L Beavers

S Clarke

M Dad

N Hennessy

T Hurn

D Howarth

J Hugo

F Jackson

A Kay

Z Khan

J Mein

S Morris

M Pattison

J Rigby

P Rigby

S Rigby

J Singleton

D Smith

T Williams

R Woollam

B Yates

42/22	<u>CHAIRMAN'S WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION</u>
	The Chairman welcomed County Councillor Terry Hurn who had replaced County Councillor Ash Sutcliffe on the Authority.
43/22	<u>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</u>
	Apologies were received from: County Councillors Hasina Khan and Sean Serridge.
44/22	<u>DISCLOSURE OF PECUNIARY AND NON-PECUNIARY INTERESTS</u>
	None received.
45/22	<u>MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING</u>
	<u>RESOLVED:</u> - That the Minutes of the CFA held on 3 October 2022 be confirmed and signed by the Chairman.
46/22	<u>MINUTES OF MEETING WEDNESDAY, 28 SEPTEMBER 2022 OF RESOURCES COMMITTEE</u>
	In response to a request from Councillor Williams, Chairman of the Committee, the Head of Human Resources confirmed it would be possible to present to a future meeting, details of how the Service was aiming to increase firefighter applications from females.

	<u>RESOLVED</u> : - That the proceedings of the Resources Committee held on 28 September 2022 be noted and endorsed.
47/22	<u>MINUTES OF MEETING THURSDAY, 3 NOVEMBER 2022 OF MEMBER TRAINING & DEVELOPMENT WORKING GROUP</u>
	<u>RESOLVED</u> : - That the proceedings of the Member Training and Development Working Group held on 3 November 2022 be noted and endorsed.
48/22	<u>NOTES OF MEETING MONDAY, 7 NOVEMBER 2022 OF STRATEGY GROUP</u>
	<p>The Chairman commented that the Strategy Group was a good opportunity outside the committee structure to receive a lot of information and to make comments. At the last meeting Members received a really good report on the Emergency Cover Review (ECR) from the Deputy Chief Fire Officer. Members were interested, involved and asked a lot of questions. The Chairman was pleased at the number of Members who had attended and encouraged all Members to continue to attend this important meeting in future.</p> <p><u>RESOLVED</u>: - That the proceedings of the Strategy Group held on 7 November 2022 be noted and endorsed.</p>
49/22	<u>MINUTES OF MEETING MONDAY, 21 NOVEMBER 2022 OF PLANNING COMMITTEE</u>
	<u>RESOLVED</u> : - That the proceedings of the Planning Committee held on 21 November 2022 be noted and endorsed.
50/22	<u>EMERGENCY COVER REVIEW - FINAL RECOMMENDATIONS POST-CONSULTATION</u>
	<p>Members received a report which was presented to Planning Committee on 21 November 2022 (detailed minutes from which had been considered by the Authority earlier on today's agenda). The report set out details of the consultation process and analysis, presented amended Emergency Cover Review (ECR) proposals refined post-consultation and included an updated full equality impact assessment.</p> <p>The Chairman, County Councillor O'Toole stated that a letter had been sent to Authority Members and Senior Officers in the Service via email the previous evening (late on 18 December) from the Fire Brigades Union (FBU) providing further comments on the ECR. He invited Officer comment. The Deputy Chief Fire Officer felt it worth reflecting that at the Strategy Group meeting held early November he went through a comprehensive presentation on the ECR consultation process and outcomes, and the subsequent Planning Committee had considered the revised proposals in detail. He found it disappointing to receive the letter in the late evening before this meeting, which may not yet have been read by all Members, when there had been discussions with the FBU on the whole ECR over the course of the last 10 months and the FBU</p>

feedback from the consultation process was included in the agenda pack (pages 197-202). He advised that the letter contained a number of inaccuracies as follows:

- i) The letter referred to the proposal to introduce a new Flexible Wholetime Duty System or to reduce the staffing establishment on the existing 2-2-4 duty system to 24 (from 28) should an agreement not be reached with the Trade Unions (page 60 of the agenda pack) citing a report produced by the National Fire Chiefs Council regarding the working patterns project. The Deputy Chief Fire Officer advised that the letter had only referenced from the report 1 Fire and Rescue Service as having looked at crewing levels whereas, there were at least 2 other Services that referenced establishment levels lower than 28.
- ii) The Deputy Chief Fire Officer advised that the letter correctly referenced the proposed reduction in firefighter crewing levels on Day Crewing Plus (DCP) stations however, this was being proposed in order to balance the whole budget (page 60 of the agenda pack).
- iii) The Deputy Chief Fire Officer was disappointed that the letter referred to job losses and loss of fire cover, when this was not the case. The proposed ECR put 8 wholetime firefighters into the Service and potentially some additional on-call firefighters dependent on the final arrangements agreed for Penwortham and St Annes. The loss of fire cover was not accurate; throughout the ECR process the aim of maintaining all 39 fire stations and 58 fire appliances remained. The letter also challenged the data that supported an overall county impact of 0.1% (as referred to on page 62 of the agenda pack) without citing any alternative view. The Deputy Chief Fire Officer confirmed that the data used to inform the ECR had been externally analysed by a third party across tens of thousands of incidents over years of data. He confirmed that the proposals did not have a significant impact on emergency cover. What was being proposed was an efficient and effective way of deploying resources across Lancashire.

The Chairman commented that the ECR was extremely thorough and he was pleased with the response level to the consultation; congratulating everyone involved. County Councillor Hennessy agreed with the Chairman's comments thanking Officers for keeping Members involved and engaged in the whole process.

County Councillor Hennessy confirmed she was happy with the Deputy Chief Fire Officer's response to the FBU letter and likewise was disappointed that its content had not been brought to the attention of Members and Officers earlier. She was pleased that the proposals provided an increased provision of firefighters and improved technology.

The Chairman gave credit to Officers in managing the Service throughout a continuing difficult period without proposing the closure of any fire stations or any compulsory redundancies as had happened in many other Authorities.

The Chief Fire Officer advised that all interested parties had been involved through working groups throughout the ECR to listen to views and provide as

many options as possible for staff to remain on the DCP system or move to a different duty system. The next phase in implementing the ECR would be in consultation and negotiation with staff to understand individual preferences and seek to accommodate them as far as reasonably practicable, whilst delivering the best service to the public.

County Councillor Howarth stated he could not support the recommendation as his Lancashire County Council division was Penwortham. He was not convinced the consultation was effective or accurate. He thanked fire officers who had attended a South Ribble Borough Council Scrutiny Committee meeting to answer questions. Although he was aware that fire appliances travelled across the county to incidents, he was concerned that the report did not reflect that. It appeared to be based on statistics where Penwortham fire station only served the Penwortham area but this was not the case. Penwortham was the closest station to all the high-rise blocks in the centre of Preston which included new build multiple high-rise student accommodation blocks. The ECR referred only to incident levels and risk in Penwortham. It made no reference to the many cases where Penwortham appliance was the first to respond to incidents in the centre of Preston. In addition, he found it unacceptable that: i) of the 14 firefighters based at Penwortham, 11 would be expected to relocate; ii) that the final decision would be agreed by the Chief Fire Officer and Authority Chairman; and, iii) there was a recommendation for a further review across the Preston area.

In response, the Deputy Chief Fire Officer advised that for each of the stations directly affected by the ECR, individual station assessments had been completed in detail with comprehensive data available to the public on the website. It was the responsibility of Senior Fire Officers to provide holistic fire cover across Lancashire and to do that the county was divided into risk areas. The point was fully accepted that appliances crossed borders however, the station boundaries were dynamic ie: if an on-call appliance was off the run then another station's boundaries would become bigger. He confirmed that the latest technology available through North West Fire Control was used to mobilise the quickest resource to every incident. In addition, if there was a 'person's reported' house fire, 3 appliances would be sent and if there was a commercial fire, 4 appliances would be sent. He advised that the Preston area was currently covered by 4 appliances crewed either completely by wholetime firefighters or wholetime firefighters on a day crewing system and that would remain as part of these proposals. In addition, the Authority had already approved an investment in a 45m Aerial Ladder Platform (page 61 refers); this would be based in central Preston to respond to high-rise incidents. He advised that the proposal for a decision by the Chairman and Chief Fire Officer concerned how the on-call element would be delivered at night; Members were not being asked to consider the crewing arrangements at Penwortham. These would be wholetime during the day and an on-call system at night. Many of the firefighters that worked at Penwortham wanted to remain on the current day crewing plus system however, that was not supported by the main Trade Union in the Service, the FBU. Part of the ECR had been to try to reduce the number of DCP stations and by making the changes at Penwortham (in part) supported that. Overall, the proposals presented helped to deliver the most effective and efficient service across the county.

County Councillor S Rigby referred to page 54 of the agenda pack under the financial implications section and the timing of the implementation given the statement 'despite these revisions, there still remains the potential need to revisit the proposals in light of the eventual funding settlement'. He queried whether the ECR would be in place before the known outcome of the financial settlement. In response, the Deputy Chief Fire Officer advised that the proposals presented did need to be progressed because the ECR aimed to provide more resilience across the county. It was recognised there were currently 11 DCP stations and this needed to change; therefore, part of the proposals reduced these to 6. To achieve that and still see a growth in firefighter numbers was an achievement. Also, 3 stations would be upgraded through an increased establishment from 14 – 24. The overall package would deliver a first-class response service and prevention and protection to the communities of Lancashire.

The Director of Corporate Services added that the funding settlement was due to be received later that week. The Authority did not consider the overall budget fully until its meeting in February therefore, there were timing issues. One of the challenges faced was the funding settlement was not across a 4-year period which would give the Authority time to plan longer-term. The settlement was expected to be across 1 or 2 years which was still relatively short-term for planning purposes and which brought its own unique challenges. In addition, there remained uncertainty around pay awards and inflation. The ECR aimed to support a sustainable platform, taking on board the comments made by the Deputy Chief Fire Officer regarding the efficiency and effectiveness of the Service. The statement in the report was more a reflection of the potential for austerity in the longer term which was difficult to currently forecast.

In response to a further question from County Councillor S Rigby, the Director of Corporate Services confirmed that some of the changes from the ECR were dependent on further internal consultation however, there would be some impact 2023/24 but it would be a continuing process.

At the request of the Chairman, the Clerk held a recorded vote and the names of Members who voted for or against the Motion and those who abstained are set out below:

For (22)

L Beavers, S Clarke, M Dad, N Hennessy, T Hurn, J Hugo, F Jackson, H Khan, Z Khan, J Mein, S Morris, D O'Toole, M Pattison, J Rigby, P Rigby, S Rigby, J Shedwick, J Singleton, D Smith, T Williams, R Woollam and B Yates.

Against (0)

None.

Abstained (1)

D Howarth.

The motion was therefore CARRIED and it was:

	<u>RESOLVED</u> : - That the Authority acknowledged the effective and accurate consultation process and approved the revised ECR proposals as presented.
51/22	<u>ANNUAL STATEMENT OF ASSURANCE</u>
	<p>The Chief Fire Officer presented the report. The Fire and Rescue National Framework for England (2018) set out the Government's high-level expectations, priorities and objectives for Fire and Rescue Authorities (FRA's) in England. Included within the framework was the requirement that all FRA's must provide assurance on financial, governance and operational matters.</p> <p>The Statement of Assurance was considered by Members. It aimed to provide the required accountability and transparency to Lancashire communities and the Government that Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service continued to deliver efficient, effective value for money services.</p> <p>This statement sat alongside the Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP), Statement of Accounts, the Annual Governance Statement, the Annual Service Plan and Annual Progress Report. It detailed what measures were in place to assure that the Combined Fire Authority's performance was efficient, economic, and effective and provided further evidence that LFRS continued to deliver under the expectations detailed within both the National Framework and its own Risk Management Plan.</p> <p><u>RESOLVED</u>: - That the Authority approved the Annual Statement of Assurance 2021-22 as presented and approved the signing of this by the Chairman of the Authority and the Chief Fire Officer.</p>
52/22	<u>MEMBER CHAMPION ACTIVITY REPORT</u>
	<p>The concept of Member Champions was introduced in December 2007. A review of the areas of focus for Member Champions was considered at the Authority meeting held in June 2017 where new areas of responsibility were agreed. The current Member Champions and their areas of responsibility were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Safety – Councillor Jean Rigby • Equality, Diversity and Inclusion – Councillor Zamir Khan • Health and Wellbeing – County Councillor Andrea Kay • Road Safety – County Councillor Ron Woollam <p>The Chairman thanked the Member Champions for their work. Reports relating to activity were provided on a regular basis to the Authority. In presenting their sections of the report each Member Champion took the opportunity to thank the staff that worked with them for their dedication and support. This report related to activity for the period up to 30 November 2022.</p> <p>In response to a question raised by County Councillor Pattison, County Councillor Woollam confirmed that work was undertaken with Lancashire County Council (LCC) colleagues to provide 'Slow Down, Save Lives' stickers and these were available from LCC for distribution as appropriate.</p>

	<p><u>RESOLVED</u>: - That the Authority noted the report and acknowledged the work of the respective Champions.</p>
53/22	<p><u>FIRE PROTECTION REPORT</u></p>
	<p>The report summarised Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service prosecutions pertaining to fire safety offences and set out convictions resulting from 5 arson incidents which had progressed via the criminal justice process.</p> <p>Fire Protection and Business Support information was also included in the report to provide Members with an update on the continually evolving regulatory position and how the Service was developing and adapting both its services and workforce to ensure it kept pace with the changes to keep public and firefighters safe in the built environment.</p> <p><u>RESOLVED</u>: - That the Authority noted and endorsed the report.</p>
54/22	<p><u>OPERATIONAL INCIDENTS OF INTEREST</u></p>
	<p>The report provided Members with information relating to operational incidents of note over the period 1 September 2022 – 30 November 2022.</p> <p>Councillor Jane Hugo queried whether any multi-agency lessons had been learned from the counter-terrorism exercise in Blackpool (as referenced on pages 267 and 268 of the report). In response, the Deputy Chief Fire Officer advised that there was a significant number of resources that attended the exercise which was organised through the Lancashire Resilience Forum (LRF). Attendees included category 1 responders (emergency services and local authorities) and some category 2 agencies. Numerous debriefs had been carried out over the course of the previous month including a strategic debrief the previous week. All feedback was being collated through the Service's Response and Emergency Planning Team. Learning from the exercise would be progressed internally by the Service and by the LRF with other agencies. The Deputy Chief Fire Officer advised that government ministers were involved in discussions given it was such a significant incident. The exercise was well organised with staff in attendance a credit to the Service. The Deputy Chief Fire Officer confirmed that Members regularly received details of business continuity test exercises and this would be reported in due course.</p> <p>County Councillor Clarke referred to an incident on Poulton Road in Fleetwood (page 266 of the agenda pack) where the Service attended a major building fire at a property that had been derelict for a number of years. He commended the actions of the firefighters in attendance who were able to stop the fire spreading to neighbouring properties.</p> <p>In addition to the report, County Councillor Kay wanted to thank staff at Fleetwood Fire Station who had responded to support her following a number of reports of antisocial behaviour in the Wyre area.</p> <p>Councillor Williams thanked staff from Bispham Fire Station who had attended</p>

	<p>a road traffic accident in Blackpool involving 3 people including a pregnant lady. The Service removed the roof of the vehicle using hydraulic rescue equipment and the lady was rescued safely.</p> <p>County Councillor Shedwick acknowledged the range of activities detailed in the report including the work of the activity dogs. He also thanked staff for attending a further road traffic accident which had occurred the previous evening in Thornton.</p> <p>County Councillor Singleton thanked staff who attended the road traffic collision in Singleton village (page 268 of the agenda pack) where there had unfortunately been a fatality and multiple casualties. He understood that speed cameras would now be made available on the road where the accident occurred.</p> <p><u>RESOLVED</u>: - That the Authority noted the report.</p>
55/22	<u>MEMBER COMPLAINTS</u>
	<p>The Monitoring Officer confirmed that there had been no complaints since the last meeting.</p> <p><u>RESOLVED</u>: - That the current position be noted.</p>
56/22	<u>DATE OF NEXT MEETING</u>
	The next meeting of the Authority would be held on <u>Monday 20 February 2023</u> at 10:00am at the Training Centre, Euxton.
57/22	<u>EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC</u>
	<u>RESOLVED</u> : - 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.
58/22	<u>BUSINESS CONTINUITY</u>
	<p>(Paragraphs 1, 3 and 4)</p> <p>The Assistant Chief Fire Officer provided Members with an update on the current approach to business continuity in the event of industrial action.</p> <p><u>RESOLVED</u>:- That the report be noted and action outlined endorsed.</p>
59/22	<u>URGENT BUSINESS (PART 2)</u>
	<p>(Paragraph 3)</p> <p>Members received an update from the Chief Fire Officer of the potential impact</p>

on the Service during industrial action planned by North West Ambulance Service staff for later that week.

RESOLVED: - That the report be noted.

LFRS HQ
Fulwood

M NOLAN
Clerk to CFA