

# Lancashire Combined Fire Authority Planning Committee

Monday, 17 July 2023, at 10.00 am in the Main Conference Room, Service Headquarters, Fulwood.

## Minutes

<b>Present:</b>	
<b>Councillors</b>	
S Clarke (Chair)	
J Singleton (Vice-Chair)	
G Baker	
M Dad	
N Hennessy	
J Hugo	
D O'Toole	
P Rigby	
J Shedwick	

<b>Officers</b>
S Healey, Deputy Chief Fire Officer (LFRS) J Charters, Assistant Chief Fire Officer (LFRS) T Powell, Area Manager, Head of Service Improvement (LFRS) J Ashton, Area Manager (Acting) Head of ToR and Innovation and Improvement (LFRS) K McCreesh, Group Manager - Community Protection Manager (LFRS) D Brooks, Principal Member Services Officer (LFRS) L Barr, Member Services Officer (LFRS)
<b>In attendance</b>
K Wilkie, Fire Brigades Union

1/23	<b>Apologies for Absence</b>
	Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Fred Jackson.
2/23	<b>Disclosure of Pecuniary and Non-Pecuniary Interests</b>
	County Councillor Rigby advised that a member of his family owned the old Odeon site in Preston which had recently had a large fire (as detailed on page 38 of the agenda pack).
3/23	<b>Minutes of Previous Meeting</b>
	CC Hennessy raised a number of questions under matters arising:

- Page 8, Leadership Development – The Deputy Chief Fire Officer advised that the Service had an ongoing programme of development and was currently looking to go out to tender for the delivery of levels 3, 5 and 7 ILM/CMI courses.
- Page 11, National Definition of Risk – The Deputy Chief Fire Officer advised that 2005 saw national standards disappear and the development of integrated (now community) risk management plans with each fire and rescue service setting its own performance standards. In relation to risk, it was fair to say that services could define it differently but at a national level the National Fire Chiefs Council was undertaking some work towards creating a consistent approach. This was being led by Cleveland Fire Brigade Chief Fire Officer, Ian Hayton and was in progress.
- Page 12, His Majesty’s Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) progress report to Strategy Group – The Assistant Chief Fire Officer advised the action plan had not been taken to the last Strategy Group meeting due given the scale of items already included on the agenda and time constraints for the meeting. A broad update was within the Planning Committee agenda pack and it was agreed that the action plan could be brought to a future meeting of the Planning Committee.

**Resolved:** That the Minutes of the last meeting held on 6 February 2023 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

4/23

### Annual Service Report

The Deputy Chief Fire Officer presented the report. The Annual Service Report 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. These actions were derived from the medium-term strategic goals highlighted in the Community Risk Management Plan.

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

Incidents attended	18,841
Average attendance time	7 min 48 seconds
Fires attended	5,632
People lost their lives in ADFs	8
Accidental dwelling fires (ADFs)	772
Casualties from ADFs	37
ADFs prevented from spreading	86%
Missing person searches (supporting other emergency services)	94
Gaining entry to property incidents (supporting other emergency services)	914
Road traffic collisions attended	621
Home Fire Safety Checks delivered	22,210
Children and young people received prevention education	110,197
People took part in road safety education	18,755

Fire safety enforcement notices issued	158
Businesses prohibited from operating	15
On-call firefighters recruited	64

The Annual Service Report as now considered by Members highlighted a number of key deliverables against the priority areas of: i) people, ii) prevention, iii) protection, iv) response and v) value for money related work streams:

**i) Valuing our people so they can focus on making Lancashire safer**

- Embed the Core Code of Ethics alongside our STRIVE values. These provide guidance on the professional behaviours expected of all our staff to ensure our workplace was one where everyone felt valued, included, and able to reach their full potential;
- Focused on developing the capability and resilience of leaders to support their staff in achieving their full potential through talent management, promotion pathways, and continuous improvement;
- Recruiting, training, and developing people who could meet the diverse needs of the residents of Lancashire and bring diversity of thought and talent into our Service was a priority;
- Delivering firefighter pension changes;
- Upgrade fire station facilities;
- A celebration of our people through award ceremonies, Chief Fire Officer personal commendations and from individual and organisational recognition at national level.

**ii) Preventing fires and other emergencies from happening**

- Reduce fires and other emergencies in Lancashire's diverse communities;
- Improve our Home Fire Safety Check (HFSC) service;
- Develop prevention services for homes equipped with assistive technology.

**iii) Protecting people and property when fires happen**

- Transform fire protection and business safety;
- Introduce Business Fire Safety Checks;
- Strengthen our fire safety inspection programme to meet evolving standards;
- Introduce a new automatic fire alarm attendance policy.

**iv) Responding to fires and other emergencies quickly and competently**

- Review emergency cover incorporating the replacement of the day crewing plus duty system;
- Review special fire appliances and resource provision;
- Invest in our fleet;
- Respond to the impacts of climate change;
- Implement operational learning in response to national events;
- Optimise emergency cover through improved data including dynamic mobilising software.

## **v) Delivering value for money in how we use our resources**

- Implement the first stages of our digital strategy;
- Create digitally enabled fire engines;
- Install CCTV on fire engines;
- Replace a number of drill towers.

It was noted that during the previous year the Service set out to strengthen community safety in respect of emerging risks affecting Lancashire.

Climate change in particular was having a significant impact on homes, businesses and environments, and the risk of flooding and wildfires had increased. In response, the Service had invested in wildfire personal protective equipment (PPE) for every firefighter plus additional equipment for specialist wildfire units and 2 new all-terrain vehicles were added to the fleet to make it easier to access rural areas during extreme weather events.

In addition, collaboration with other emergency services continued to deliver improved public services. The Service had attended more incidents than the previous year to gain entry to homes where there was a medical emergency and had assisted in searching for missing people. A new collaboration with North West Ambulance Service on their community first responder initiative had already seen a Lancashire resident benefit from life-saving first aid from a member of LFRS staff responding from the workplace.

Business Fire Safety Checks was a new service delivered by operational crews to help small and lower risk businesses comply with fire safety laws, following significant changes to legislation. This meant dedicated fire safety inspection teams could focus on premises where occupants were at a higher risk of harm.

Through consultation, the emergency cover review of fire engines and crewing arrangements alongside community risks had identified improvements to reflect the most effective and efficient use of resources for the whole of Lancashire. All 39 fire stations and 58 fire appliances had been maintained and the number of firefighters employed was increasing. An innovation that was already benefitting Lancashire as part of the review was the introduction of dynamic cover software to deploy resources. This provided visual data on community risks and emergency cover in real-time to inform decision-making.

During the year the Service was proud to offer critical support to people outside of Lancashire, as it responded to international emergency events.

It was recognised that behind all the achievements were dedicated people with the highest levels of skills and expertise united in a determination to make Lancashire safer.

CC O'Toole thought the report to be excellent, covering so many aspects of the work undertaken by the Service including international assistance and support. The emergency cover review changes (detailed on page 33 of the agenda pack) which maintained all 39 fire stations and 58 fire appliances was to be commended as this was not the case in other Fire Authorities in the North West. He commented (in relation to pages 25 and 31 of the agenda pack) that he was pleased with the

	<p>improved relationship with North West Ambulance Service (NWAS). This excellent collaboration was demonstrated by the first LFRS volunteer First Responder who had provided lifesaving care.</p> <p>CC Shedwick commented that the year in numbers information (on p 26 of the agenda pack) demonstrated the breadth of work undertaken.</p> <p>CC Hennessy thanked officers for the detailed report. She was pleased that the 360° appraisal process now included the core code of ethics and a programme of staff events related to the code had been so far delivered to 281 members of staff. She was proud that the Service had recently received a Silver Award for the Armed Forces Covenant.</p> <p>CC Singleton commented that further to the upgrade to fire station facilities in year (page 28 of the agenda pack) he had attended an open day event over the weekend at Preston Fire Station. This was a very well-run event however; the building was in need of the forthcoming review.</p> <p><b>Resolved:</b> That the Planning Committee noted and endorsed the Annual Service Report.</p>
5/23	<p><b>Serious Violence Duty</b></p>
	<p>The Assistant Chief Fire Officer introduced Group Manager Kirsty McCreesh who presented the report which provided Members with an update on progress against the Serious Violence Duty (the Duty).</p> <p>The Duty was part of the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Act 2022 which came into force on 31 January 2023. This new legislation required a range of specified authorities to work together to share information and allow them to target their interventions. Within the Duty Statutory Guidance it was stated that ideally this should be done through existing partnership structures and these structures should be used to collaborate and plan to prevent and reduce serious violence within their local communities.</p> <p>The Duty identified the Police, Probation Services, Youth Offending Teams, Integrated Care Boards and local authorities in addition to Fire and Rescue Authorities as being specified authorities. (Prison and Education Authorities were known as Relevant Authorities able to co-operate with Specified Authorities as necessary.)</p> <p>Specified authorities must identify the types of serious violence that occurred in the area and, so far as was possible to do so, identify the causes of that violence. To do so, specified authorities should undertake an evidence-based analysis of the causes of serious violence and use this analysis to develop a local strategic needs assessment which should inform the local strategy. The strategy, which specified authorities must prepare and implement, should contain bespoke solutions to prevent and reduce serious violence in their area. The Duty did not specify a lead organisation however the statutory guidance identified the Police and Crime Commissioner as being the lead convener for local partner agencies. It was for the specified authorities to come together to decide on the appropriate lead and structure of collaboration for their area.</p>

At a meeting of the specified authorities on the 5th January 2023 it was agreed that the responsibility for the delivery of the Duty would sit with all Lancashire Community Safety Partnerships.

It was noted that Lancashire was fortunate to have the Lancashire Violence Reduction Network (LVRN), as not all localities throughout the country had a Violence Reduction Unit. Through the LVRN, Lancashire had a Serious Violence Strategic Needs Assessment and Lancashire Serious Violence Strategy. Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service (LFRS) was represented within the LVRN and local district needs assessments produced by the Violence Reduction Network were included within the district planning process to ensure discharge at a local level through targeted risk reduction activities.

It was also noted that the Crest Advisory Board had been commissioned by Home Office to conduct a readiness assessment across the country. LFRS had contributed to the Lancashire return which aimed to identify barriers and areas requiring additional support as well as progress across the country in comparison to other localities.

LFRS had signed a Lancashire Partnership agreement and would be represented at a newly formed Lancashire Serious Violence and Community Safety Board.

### **Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service**

The Duty guidance recognised that Fire and Rescue Services were established in engaging with local communities to promote fire safety as well as wider models of community and individual engagement to support citizenship, community cohesion and direct support to vulnerable individuals and communities. Therefore, work with young people and safeguarding, in addition to fire reduction strategies such as the sector's work to reduce deliberate fires, should be recognised as part of the Duty.

LFRS had an established Prince's Trust and Fire Cadet offering. The Prince's Trust worked in partnership with LFRS, working towards a shared vision that would contribute to better outcomes for young people and local communities. LFRS had one of the strongest Prince's Trust offerings across all other Fire and Rescue Services in the country. Prince's Trust was used as a case study within the statutory guidance for responsible authorities, produced by Home Office to demonstrate how Fire and Rescue Services engagement can strengthen protective factors and allow opportunities for positive behaviour change.

LFRS also delivered education packages in schools. This was offered to all schools across Lancashire in years' 2 and 6 with a comprehensive uptake. LFRS also picked up tertiary prevention work for example Arson Threat Referrals, an intervention session delivered to young fire setters (FIRE S) and bespoke work with Youth Offending Teams.

Safeguarding was a core function of LFRS, working across all levels and in all areas to support, and in some cases lead risk reduction services to those identified as vulnerable and at risk from exploitation or abuse. LFRS was represented at Local Authority Safeguarding Boards which was recognised within the Duty.

**National Fire Chiefs Council**

It was noted that during the consultation period for the Duty, the National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) held a number of meetings with the Home Office to ensure the role of the Fire and Rescue Service was fully realised as part of the Duty. NFCC released a paper in November 2022 presented by the NFCC Prevention Lead, CFO Neil Odin.

NFCC identified the primary role for Fire and Rescue Services in the Duty to be the well-established work that was already undertaken with Children and Young People and the Duty was referenced within the NFCC Early Intervention Implementation Framework. Existing safeguarding work and arson risk reduction was also referenced as being key to Fire and Rescue Services involvement in the Duty.

In response to a question from CC Shedwick regarding membership of the Lancashire Community Safety Partnerships, GM McCreesh advised this would normally be the relevant Station Manager or Community Fire Safety Team Leader.

In response to a question from CC Hennessy regarding membership of the newly formed Lancashire Serious Violence and Community Safety Board, GM McCreesh advised that the Chair was the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner with Area Manager Hamer representing LFRS alongside GM Liam Wilson who was now the single point of contact for the Service. In response to a further question from CC Hennessy, GM McCreesh advised that partnership work presented an opportunity to raise awareness of the breadth of work undertaken. In response to a further question from CC Hennessy, GM McCreesh advised that cadet units were located in conjunction with partnerships and were aligned to risk with recruitment currently ongoing for a unit at Skelmersdale.

CC Singleton commended the work of the Service in relation to the Prince's Trust programme where the focus was on improved opportunities for young people.

**Resolved:** That the Planning Committee noted and endorsed the ongoing actions.

6/23

**Blue Light Collaboration Board Update**

The Deputy Chief Fire Officer introduced Area Manager Tom Powell and Acting Area Manager Jonny Ashton.

The Deputy Chief Fire Officer advised that the report updated on progress of the ongoing workstreams that were being progressed under the Blue Light Collaboration Board. The workstreams were being managed effectively through both the Strategic and Tactical Boards and recently, Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service (LFRS) had introduced a Station Manager role to support and deliver the key workstreams which were: -

**i) Missing Persons (missing from home)**

Existing collaboration had continued to be a success. While the number of requests for attendance had decreased over the past few years LFRS had supported Lancashire Constabulary (LanCon) with a number of high-profile cases; where support had been provided from the initial search on day one up to, and including, the inquest.

The main objective of the project was now to improve even further the existing collaboration between LFRS and LanCon by providing support where it was most required. The aim was to enhance specialist teams from several 'on-call' and specialist crews in Lancashire where the locality was close to 'hot spots' where people were known to go missing from home and, where LanCon could often have limited resources thus allowing LFRS specialist search teams to search familiar ground in a reduced timeframe.

The training ensured that specialist teams developed an increased knowledge of what was required by LanCon in the management of a missing from home case and the importance of intelligence gathering, record keeping where an area had been searched, ensuring a crime scene wasn't contaminated and enhancing the working relationships, at ground level, between the two services.

The Deputy Chief Fire Officer added that over the weekend the Service responded to a missing person incident using the very latest drone technology which featured an underwater sonar device. Thankfully the missing person was found safe and well.

## **ii) Estates and Co-location**

This was a longer-term work stream with interdependencies as there were several internal projects within Lancashire Constabulary to review current building stock. This included Lancashire Constabulary headquarters, and various police stations. Property leads from all three agencies had met on 22 June 2023 with a review of existing work and future opportunities discussed. This would now become a bi-monthly meeting to ensure work was progressed. As part of this work North West Ambulance Service (NWAS), LanCon and LFRS had shared information with regards facilities and estates management linked to current and future workstreams to enable a more cohesive approach to future proofing opportunities within the estate's portfolios. LFRS had also progressed work with the potential to re-negotiate leases and licences at Lytham and St Annes fire stations for the next three years with LanCon. In addition to this, the Service would ensure that all Blue Light partners were included in the scoping work being undertaken in relation to the Preston area review.

## **iii) First Responder**

A phased approach was agreed in terms of volunteers signing up to the scheme. Phase 1 was being rolled out to non-operational LFRS staff, such as Community Fire Safety and other Green Book members of staff. Phase 2 would consider the option to broaden the scope to roll out to Grey Book operational staff including Flexi Duty Officers, all on a voluntary basis.

Progress on phase 1 had resulted in 1 non-operational member of LFRS, responding to category 1 incidents, and who had already provided lifesaving care while responding. A further 4 members of staff had successfully passed their interviews and Enhanced DBS checks and were currently awaiting suitable training dates before being fully on board which was expected to be within the next 3 months.



A NWAS application was used to mobilise First Responders who could accept or decline the notification. The information that was then held by NWAS enabled LFRS to monitor the data provided by the reporting system to ensure suitable provisions such as welfare arrangements were in place to support staff, post incident(s). A more in-depth analysis would be completed once the next 4 members of staff were on board. The findings from that analysis would form options to progress to phase 2 of the project.

Further discussion would take place with LanCon to review if there were any suitable non-operational roles that could be added as First Responders. The Deputy Chief Fire Officer advised of an error in the report and confirmed that it was non-operational staff who attended cardiac arrests alongside NWAS therefore collaboration to that effect was already taking place.

#### **iv) Leadership Development**

Work was currently ongoing in Phase 1 for scoping further opportunities to collaborate. LFRS had identified 3 individuals who had been nominated to take part in the “Inside Out” leadership programme that was being led by LanCon, and this would hopefully come to fruition towards the end of 2023. This would then enable a review of the programme with a view to further expanding the offer across the organisation.

Phase 2 of the project would look to explore opportunities to offer places to external partners within LFRS delivered ILM courses and some of the “softer skill” courses that embed and reinforce effective leadership and raise self-awareness. The ongoing work would aim to realise efficiencies and help build professional working relationships across the Blue Light Services.

#### **v) Command Units**

The aim of this project was to establish and deliver additional collaborative uses of the command units in LFRS to support effective multi-agency working among emergency responders. The key objectives were to improve operational effectiveness and in line with LFRS’ mission; ‘Making Lancashire Safer’.

LFRS was currently rolling out a small command unit with 2 further large command units in build as part of a previously agreed capital vehicle replacement project. It was anticipated the two larger units would be in service by October 2023. It was expected that the initial benefits to be realised would be technological advances that would further develop information sharing and situational awareness aligned to improving and embedding the Joint Emergency Services Interoperability Principles. Further scoping and development will be overseen by the Blue Light Collaboration Board to ensure opportunities for joint working were effectively co-ordinated and delivered.

CC Shedwick commented that at the Preston Open Day over the weekend, alongside the Police and North West Ambulance Service he had met with Mountain Rescue. AM Powell advised that Mountain Rescue was a voluntary organisation that had previously provided support at incidents of flooding to transport people and goods.

	<p>In response to a question from CC Hennessy, AM Ashton advised that strategically and tactically across the blue light sector there was a lot of activity which was working well. The Deputy Chief Fire Officer added that at a strategic level the Executive Board had met with Police colleagues the previous week talking through opportunities to work together and better learn from each other.</p> <p>In response to a question from Cllr Hugo regarding the decrease of requests from LanCon in relation to missing persons, AM Ashton advised that LanCon had their own drone capability and LFRS offered resources (ie: drones / dogs) as required to assist wherever possible.</p> <p><b>Resolved:</b> That the Planning Committee noted the report.</p>
7/23	<p><b>His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS)</b></p>
	<p>The Deputy Chief Fire Officer updated Members regarding His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) activity and LFRS planning arrangements.</p> <p><b>Values and culture in fire and rescue services</b></p> <p>HMICFRS had published a spotlight report on 30 March 2023 which focused on the values and culture of all 44 fire and rescue services in England. Since the start of inspections in 2018, HMICFRS reported that they repeatedly found evidence of poor values, culture and behaviour, including bullying, harassment and discrimination in many services. This led to recommendation that the sector should have a code of ethics, which was introduced in 2021. The spotlight report was the first time HMICFRS looked in such depth at the cumulative issue of values and culture across all services. They particularly focused on issues that had been seen in more than half (at least 26) of services and which were having a detrimental impact across the sector. These included: i) bullying, harassment, and discrimination; ii) lack of fairness and diversity; and iii) reporting and handling of concerns, including allegations of misconduct. The report examined what was working well, what needed to change and the barriers to making improvements. HMICFRS found that while some services had made improvements since their first round of inspections in respect of values and culture, many needed to do more.</p> <p>The report contained 35 recommendations, which were aimed at chief fire officers, chief constables, and national bodies and a request to implement the relevant recommendations by stated deadline(s). Fire and rescue authorities were also asked to note that fire and rescue services were required to update HMICFRS on how the recommendations were being actioned. Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service had provided HMICFRS with an update on the implementation of the recommendations, including a short self-assessment narrative per recommendation. HMICFRS would be monitoring these recommendations closely.</p> <p><b>Positive Practice Portal</b></p> <p>The National Fire Chiefs Council's (NFCC) Positive Practice Portal launched on 10 May 2023. The Positive Practice Portal would share case studies and examples of positive practice captured by HMICFRS, enabling fire and rescue services to learn from each other and improve their services for the benefit of the public. The Positive Practice Portal provided details about interventions, which had been</p>

developed to address a particular need, concern or organisational change and were recognised by HMICFRS as innovative or promising practice. These practices covered areas such as organisational culture.

### **HMICFRS Spring Data Collection**

In accordance with timescales LFRS submitted the spring data collection in June 2023.

### **Round 3 Overview**

In the next round of inspections, 'Round 3', HMICFRS would continue to inspect how effective and efficient Fire and Rescue Services (FRSs) were at carrying out their principal functions of fire safety, firefighting, and responding to road traffic collisions and other emergencies, whilst taking a more in depth, robust, look at certain aspects. As Members were already aware, HMICFRS had moved away from a tranche system to a more rolling approach. It was anticipated that this would ensure publication of the reports would be sooner after the inspection had concluded, which would enable FRSs to be able to react to feedback in a timelier way. Also, as previously reported, there were now five gradings with the new judgment of 'adequate'. Whilst it was not set in stone, indications suggested that where a service had an identified 'area for improvement', it had the potential to move a 'good' grade to 'adequate'.

Round 3 started in February 2023 and inspection activity was now underway for the first 12 services in the programme. Over a two-year period HMICFRS would inspect all 44 FRSs in England, using a similar methodology to the Round 2 inspections.

Whilst it was still not certain, planning assumptions remained that Lancashire would likely be inspected either late 2023 or early 2024 (the first 15 FRSs on the list had been given inspection dates up to September, and LFRS were 28<sup>th</sup> on the list.) The running order may be subject to change, which could be due to reasons including changes in performance or risk. Services affected by this would be informed of any planned changes at the earliest opportunity.

The newly formed Organisational Assurance Team within the Service Improvement Department would track progress from our previous inspection, monitor national themes and prepare LFRS for the round 3 inspection. AM Powell was LFRS' Service Liaison Officer.

In response to Member questions the Deputy Chief Fire Officer advised that one of the HMICFRS national recommendations from the spotlight report was for staff to have access to an independent reporting line to report anything anonymously. He confirmed that following researching a number of options, Safecall (an anonymous whistleblowing hotline) was now in place at LFRS.

CC Dad queried how many of the 35 recommendations were in place at LFRS. In response, AM Powell advised that 20 of the 35 recommendations related to Chief Fire Officers to implement within recommended deadlines. He confirmed there was a HMICFRS action plan that the Service needed to feed into and LFRS had reported back on the recommendations. The remaining 15 recommendations were for other bodies and / or were reliant on future regulatory changes and with some deadline dates of 2024 and beyond.

	<p>Further to the earlier discussion CC Hennessy requested that the action plan on the implementation of the recommendations including the short self-assessment narrative be brought to a future meeting. In response, the Deputy Chief Fire Officer advised that he would ask the Head of Human Resources to bring a report to a future Authority meeting.</p> <p><b>Resolved:</b> That the Planning Committee noted and endorsed the report.</p>
8/23	<p><b>Measuring Progress - Fire Engine Availability - KPI Review</b></p>
	<p>The Assistant Chief Fire Officer presented the report. He advised that further to scrutiny of key performance indicators (KPI) by Members of the CFA Performance Committee, the Service was asked to reflect upon the ongoing suitability of the current 'Fire Engine Availability' KPI's in particular with reference to the on-call measurement.</p> <p>Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service (LFRS) currently had one of the most challenging targets for availability of on-call fire engines of any fire and rescue service in the country and, whilst having a high aspirational target maintained focus on securing on-call fire engine availability, for some time now the Service had fallen short of delivering against this highly ambitious target.</p> <p>Work had been undertaken to compare our KPI's with those used in other Services, with the ambition being to provide Members of the Performance Committee with a suitable KPI which would better reflect holistic fire cover across the county of Lancashire, considering both wholtime and on-call availability.</p> <p>The Service had 3 KPI measurements pertaining to appliance availability across the entire fleet:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i) KPI 3.3 for Total Fire Engine Availability (which combined wholtime and on-call and was for information only);</li> <li>ii) KPI 3.3.1 for Fire Engine Availability – Wholtime Shift System (which had a target of 99.5%); and</li> <li>iii) KPI 3.3.2 for Fire Engine Availability – On-Call Shift System (which had an aspirational target of 95%).</li> </ul> <p>The On-Call appliance availability target was a demanding 95% and whilst having such a high aspirational target maintained on-call availability as a continuing Service priority, setting unrealistic targets could have a negative impact on performance and could fail to recognise the improvements that some stations were making to availability, as overall they continued to fall short of the objective.</p> <p>Members noted that 32 of the 58 LFRS pumps were crewed by on-call firefighters. Many of these appliances provided fire cover in lower-risk, rural areas, whilst others provide a secondary layer of response to that provided by wholtime crews in urban areas of the county. The Service presently measured the availability of on-call appliances against the same 95% aspirational target across the county, irrespective of demand, risk levels or a wholtime resource being within that station area.</p>

Nationally, on-call availability continued to be a challenge as highlighted by the National Fire Chiefs Council and His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services and extensive work was ongoing both locally and nationally to address some of the key issues. Within the Service, a significant volume of work was ongoing which aimed to improve recruitment, training and development, retention, and broadening the utilisation of on-call staff; all balanced against realistic role expectations given the limitations on available training hours each week.

Having considered a number of options, a proposal for Service KPI change was presented which would provide the right balance of oversight and ambition for fire engines crewed by both wholetime and on-call firefighters, supplemented by further internal KPI's for use by local managers to drive contractual performance and ensure value for money.

The proposal was to measure the 'First Fire Engine Availability (wholetime and on-call)' across the 39 risk areas within Lancashire. It was noted that the dynamic cover tool software enabled LFRS to dynamically move resources according to risk and demand, optimising ability to meet published response times. Where operational incidents arose and mobilised appliances created gaps in fire cover, the system managed cover across the county based on the known risk.

The proposal sought to report performance based on how effectively fire cover was provided across the 39 fire stations (risk areas) at a fire station level, rather than by each of the 58 fire engines. It would report on the combined availability of the primary asset at each of the 39 locations in percentage terms, whether that be a wholetime or on-call appliance. This aligned with the Response Standard KPI approach which measured first pump response times and gave a true indication of the speed of response and first intervention provided across the 39 risk areas.

Based on the last 4 full years' data, KPI 3.3 (combined wholetime and on-call availability) would be represented as:

Overall 2019/20, 95.77% (wholetime, 99.51% and on-call, 90.93%)

Overall 2020/21, 96.51% (wholetime, 99.35% and on-call, 92.83%)

Overall 2021/22, 91.65% (wholetime, 99.34% and on-call, 81.71%)

Overall 2022/23, 89.60% (wholetime, 99.35% and on-call, 76.97%)

The deterioration in performance was largely as a result of declining on-call availability. Going forward, the Service would continue to apply focus to recruitment activities centred around all on-call units, not just those which comprised the basis of the KPI calculation and to underpin the proposed Service level KPI, an incremental 2% per annum approach to increasing on-call availability would be implemented on a local level, starting from the current baseline position.

In response to a question raised by Cllr Hugo regarding whether analysis of data pre-covid would change the pattern of availability the Assistant Chief Fire Officer explained that availability was higher than now but not as high as during covid (given at that time people were working from home and / or were furloughed from their primary employment and were therefore more available). He added that the target was aspirational and not realistic at the present time and the Service would be measured against the targets set.

Cllr Hugo commented that she understood the reasoning for lowering the target and queried how a 90% target compared against other Services. In response the Assistant Chief Fire Officer advised that research indicated typical levels for other Services ranged between 85% to 90%.

CC O'Toole queried the main reason for the lack of on-call availability. In response, the Assistant Chief Fire Officer advised that if an on-call firefighter left the organisation the impact was felt straight away. Availability hinged then on attracting, training and introducing new people to become safe, competent firefighters which took time. After recruitment, it could be 6 months before breathing apparatus training was undertaken and to then go onto driving appliance training or becoming an officer in charge could take years. These were the types of issues that the Service was focussed on improving. The Deputy Chief Fire Officer added that nationally over the last decade on-call firefighters had reduced by 25%. LFRS staff had declined by 11% from 444 firefighters to just short of 400 however it was the amount of hours those staff gave that was 25% less because people wanted a better work-life balance. CC O'Toole was pleased the lack of availability was not due to mechanical issues with fire appliances.

CC Hennessy stated that she would much sooner aim high to achieve high and asked what the views of staff were. In response the Assistant Chief Fire Officer advised that Station, Group and Unit Managers were working exceptionally hard to maintain availability however, despite all their efforts it was unhelpful that the KPI was consistently in exception which could have a negative and de-motivational psychological effect. A lot of work was being done to support on-call availability. The Service was looking at every facet of the duty system to make it more efficient and improved but the numbers demonstrated the level of exception in recent years and that ultimately the Service would be measured by how successfully it achieved the targets it set itself.

CC Hennessy queried whether lowering the target to 92.5% would be a better target as it remained aspirational. In response the Deputy Chief Fire Officer advised that no other Service had a target of 95%. The ACFO stated that the proposal for the 90% overall target was more achievable and would be supplemented by a local 2% in-year target increase for on-call units where low availability featured. As such that the KPI could be reviewed annually with a view to an upward increase.

CC Rigby thanked officers for making Members aware of the challenges currently faced.

CC Singleton MOVED the recommendation in the report and proposed that the new indicator be reviewed annually. This was SECONDED by CC Shedwick who commented that Members were well placed in their communities to assist raising awareness of the on-call firefighter role.

At the request of the Chair of the Committee, CC Clarke, the meeting 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:

	<p><u>For (7)</u> S Clarke, J Singleton, G Baker, J Hugo, D O'Toole, P Rigby and J Shedwick</p> <p><u>Against (1)</u> N Hennessy</p> <p><u>Abstained (1)</u> M Dad</p> <p>The motion was therefore CARRIED and it was:</p> <p><b>Resolved:</b> That the Planning Committee</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i) approved a combined KPI for first pump availability of wholetime and on-call fire engines across the 39 stations in Lancashire with a revised overall availability target of 90%, which would be reviewed annually; and</li> <li>ii) approved the removal of sub-indicators 3.3.1 and 3.3.2 which would be encompassed in the above new KPI acknowledging that monitoring would continue locally by Service Delivery Managers.</li> </ul>
9/23	<p><b>Measuring Progress - 1st Pump Critical Fire and Critical Special Service Response Standards - Key Performance Indicator Review</b></p>
	<p>The Assistant Chief Fire Officer presented the report. He advised that Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service (LFRS) currently set itself one of the most challenging targets for critical incident response times in the country. Having a high aspirational target reflected the priority and importance of responding to incidents in a suitable time, and whilst LFRS response times remained exceptionally fast in comparison to many other Fire and Rescue Services, the standard was not presently achieved. As such, Members of the Performance Committee had requested that the Service consider the ongoing suitability of this KPI.</p> <p>Members were aware that UK Fire and Rescue Services set their own response standards in line with their Community Risk Management Plan and were then held to account against those standards. It was noted that there were different methods of measuring the response, primarily from time of call or from time of mobilisation, through to the time that the appliances booked as being 'in attendance' at the incident.</p> <p>The two key methods used by fire services in the UK were "Crew Response Time" and "Total Response Time". It was also noted that LFRS previously used the "Crew Response Time" standard (which measured from the point of mobilisation). However, in 2015/16 (and to present a more accurate position) this was reviewed and updated to a "Total Response Time" method whereby 60 seconds were added to each risk level to account for call handling time by North West Fire Control (NWFC).</p> <p>LFRS used a median average of call handling time and the data used for this analysis showed the median call times within Lancashire for critical incidents varied between 1 minute 2 seconds and 1 minute 23 seconds and that the median was 73 seconds. Therefore, when considering that the updated response time factored in</p>

only 60 seconds for call handling time, the figures represented a tightening of the standard of between 2 – 23 seconds from 2015/16 onwards.

Also, when comparing LFRS with other Fire and Rescue Services (FRS), the 90% target and the reaction times set by LFRS were amongst the most challenging set by any UK FRS, particularly those within the Family Grouping (considered by Members at appendix 1). The other FRS' within the 'predominantly urban' category had response standards which were slower than those of LFRS even when call handling was often not factored into the overall response times.

LFRS was currently categorised as 'predominantly urban' though it had a diverse demographic with both highly urbanised and remote rural areas. Comparing LFRS with other 'predominantly urban' services (considered by Members at appendix 2) it was evident that Lancashire was significantly larger geographically than the majority of the services in the category (but with a relatively low average population density / km<sup>2</sup>). It was not surprising therefore that when comparing average attendance times of 'predominantly urban' services for primary fires (considered by Members at appendix 3) Lancashire was slower than the national average for this category. However, LFRS was performing better than the overall national average (by 1 minute 5 seconds) and had also showed an improvement since 2016 which contradicted the national trend of increased response times. This reflected the work which had gone into this field and the benefits of technological innovations that had been delivered by the Service, such as the 'pre-alerting' of fire engines. Since 2016/17 the Service had improved average response times by 21 seconds whereas the overall family group had only improved by 3 seconds. Furthermore, it could be argued that given Lancashire was the largest county within the family group, with a low population density per km<sup>2</sup> it was more similar to 'significantly rural' FRS which had a notably higher average response time of 9 minutes and 58 seconds.

The 2 most common approaches for measuring performance were: i) by percentage of incidents achieved within target (ie: life critical incidents attended within 10 minutes on 80% of occasions); or ii) by average time to attend incidents under target (ie: life critical incidents attended within an average of 10 minutes). Although the 2 metrics appeared to be very similar, they provided significantly different results. Of the 2 methods used HMICFRS identified that, 57% used the first method and 32% used the second with the other 11% a variety of other approaches. HMICFRS had not made a judgement on which method to use but they had praised a FRS that had used the second method. The disadvantage of the first method was that it offered a binary pass or fail result whereby the second method provided for an average and was proposed to be more transparent for understanding by our communities and therefore a better overall representation of Service performance.

### **Changes to reporting KPI 3.1 – Critical Fires**

LFRS currently used the first metric and aimed to achieve its response standards on 90% of occasions. A table in the report set out how successful the Service had been in successive years from 2015/16 to 2022/23 for each of the very high, high, medium and low risk categories. The flaw in that approach was it did not provide a measure of by how much time the response had or had not been achieved.



The report also set out a table using the same data (using a mean average as this was considered the most accurate and transparent approach) to show an average response time which clearly identified how effectively the Service was achieving each standard as set out below:

**Average Response Times / Target**

Year	Low (12 mins)	Medium (10)	High (8)	Very High (6)
2015/2016	08:42	06:51	06:24	05:53
2016/2017	08:42	07:01	06:01	05:55
2017/2018	08:40	06:48	06:17	05:41
2018/2019	08:52	06:51	06:17	05:59
2019/2020	08:15	06:26	06:02	06:07
2020/2021	08:27	06:16	05:48	05:31
2021/2022	08:52	06:25	05:50	05:44
2022/2023	08:33	06:26	06:17	05:35

Furthermore, Members were reassured that regardless of response time ‘success’ or ‘failure’ against target, robust operational assurance and debriefing processes were embedded to ensure the Service had a learning and development approach to operational response arrangements

**KPI 3.2 – Critical Special Service Response**

The Critical Special Service Response target was set at 13 minutes and was not affected by risk rating. The current method of measuring performance showed that LFRS had only once achieved the 90% target within the period of data used for the analysis (2015-2023). However, the following table in the report showed that by applying the same average response metric to critical special service incidents, the Service could be seen to be performing much better than the current binary method and provided a more accurate reflection of service performance:

**Critical Special Service Incidents - 1st Pump Response**

Year	Pass rate	Mean Average Response
2015/2016	86.6%	08:53
2016/2017	86.8%	08:51
2017/2018	83.9%	09:35
2018/2019	89.8%	08:40
2019/2020	88.9%	08:35
2020/2021	89.4%	08:21
2021/2022	90.0%	08:11
2022/2023	89.6%	08:17

CC O’Toole was pleased that call handling times were included in the data which he believed should be consistent across all FRS to compare performance effectively. In response to a query from CC O’Toole regarding whether call

handling time had improved due to the benefit of North West Fire Control Centre (NWFC), the Assistant Chief Fire Officer advised that performance had improved significantly with the percentage of calls handled within standard now circa 90% and there were many additional ancillary benefits. For example, at the most recent Performance Committee meeting a graph had been shared which detailed incidents ‘not mobilised to’, as a result of effective call challenge, which ultimately improved FRS productivity by preventing unnecessary mobilisations and interruptions to crews’ activities (Business Fire Safety Checks, Home Fire Safety Checks, gathering risk information and training).

In response to a question raised by CC Singleton regarding the family group comparator information not including call handling time across all FRS (appendix 1), the Assistant Chief Fire Officer advised that if 1 minute was removed from LFRS’ figures (the call handling element) then our response standards and times achieved, would look even more favourable.

In response to a question raised by CC Hennessy, the Assistant Chief Fire Officer advised that the FRS praised by HMICFRS had used the method of reporting by average time to attend incidents however, this did not include a call handling time. In response to further questions from CC Hennessy, the Assistant Chief Fire Officer added that the proposal was for the method of reporting to change only, and not the target times for speed of response, in order to improve transparency. When asked by CC Hennessy whether the proposal provided ‘best value’ the ACFO confirmed that in his view the speed of response provided outstanding value to Lancashire’s communities. He confirmed that the response standards against each category of risk would remain the same (at: very high, 6 minutes; high, 8 minutes; medium, 10 minutes and low risk, 12 minutes).

**Resolved:** That the Planning Committee noted the content of the paper and agreed to change the method of reporting for both KPI 3.1 – Critical Fire Response - First Fire Engine Attendance and KPI 3.2 – Critical Special Service Response - First Fire Engine Attendance to ‘average response times’.

10/23

**Measuring Progress - Addition of Key Performance Indicator for Business Fire Safety Checks**

The Assistant Chief Fire Officer presented the report. He advised that Business Fire Safety Checks (BFSC) were inspections of lower risk commercial buildings undertaken by operational firefighters. They typically resulted in low level interventions, however where deficiencies identified were more significant, they could be followed up with a subsequent visit by a Business Safety Adviser (mid-level intervention) or a higher-level intervention, such as enforcement under the Fire Safety Order by a Fire Safety Inspector.

Lancashire presently had over 65,000 commercial buildings. A large proportion of those were lower risk buildings which would have been unlikely to make the inspection programme for Fire Safety Inspectors thereby delivering BFSC’s the Service was effectively addressing the built environment risk more broadly whilst improving our operational crews’ knowledge of building construction and how buildings should behave when involved in fire.

	<p>During 2022 the Service began rollout of training to operational crews on the delivery of Building Fire Safety Checks (BFSCs). During the first year, crews began delivering the service as and when they had completed their training and as such, the Service completed over 2,500 BFSC's in the first part-year. Training rollout has since been completed across all wholetime stations and local targets had now been applied within each district, based upon risks identified within the district's local risk management plan.</p> <p>The Service proposed to include a new Key Performance Indicator (KPI) into the quarterly performance report 'Measuring Progress' to ensure that Members and the public were suitably appraised.</p> <p><b>Resolved:</b> that the content of the report be noted and the recommendation to implement a new Key Performance Indicator for Business Fire Safety Checks be approved.</p>
11/23	<b>Date of Next Meeting</b>
	<p>The next meeting of the Committee would be held on <b>Monday 20 November 2023</b> at 1000 hours in the main Conference Room at Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service Headquarters, Fulwood.</p> <p>Further meeting dates were noted for 5 February 2024 and agreed for 15 July 2024.</p>

**M Nolan**  
**Clerk to CFA**

**LFRS HQ**  
**Fulwood**