

Lancashire Combined Fire Authority

Meeting to be held on 19 February 2024

Member Champion Activity Report

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Executive Summary

This paper provides a report on the work of the Member Champions for the period up to 18 February 2024.

Recommendation(s)

The Authority is requested to note and endorse the report and acknowledge the work of the respective Champions.

Information

The concept of Member Champions was introduced in December 2007 with a review of the roles in 2017.

The Authority appoints its Member Champions at its Annual Meeting in June, and the current Member Champions are:

- Community Safety – Councillor Jean Rigby
- Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion – Councillor Zamir Khan
- Health and Wellbeing – County Councillor John Singleton
- Road Safety – County Councillor Ron Woollam

Reports relating to the activity of the Member Champions are provided on a regular basis to the Authority. During this period, all have undertaken their respective role in accordance with the defined terms of reference. Their activity to date is as follows:

Community Safety – Councillor Jean Rigby

Throughout this year's Brightsparx period, Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service (LFRS) have participated in education sessions on Awaz Radio Station (Pendle Community Radio), delivering sessions from 13 October – 3 November. The delivery team discussed firework safety and provided important advice on staying safe and keeping out of trouble during the bonfire season. The identification of specific areas, including Daneshouse and Queensgate in Burnley, and Audley and Bastwell in Blackburn, where attacks on firefighters were prevalent, allowed for targeted and relevant discussions to take place. The team's openness about the attacks on firefighters during the bonfire period, and the incidents that had occurred over the last two years garnered strong reactions from the listeners. Evaluation of the Brightsparx campaign, indicate that there were no attacks on firefighters during bonfire night, which is a positive outcome. The radio show's contribution to raising awareness, fostering community support, and preventing incidents was evident, and is something we will continue to build on.

Staff in Eastern, Pennine and Southern area, monitored the construction of bonfires and liaised with local authorities to remove those deemed illegal or dangerous. This has been a success and has seen a reduction in the associated Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) and recorded secondary fires within East and West Lancashire.

In South Ribble, Community Fire Safety (CFS) staff ran a Brightspax poster competition. This was with South Ribble Primary Schools asking pupils to create a Firework / Bonfire safety poster. South Ribble Council donated an iPad and tickets to the Worden Park bonfire as prizes. Judging involved LFRS staff and South Ribble Councillors, and the final presentation took place at Leyland Fire Station.

Pennine area staff continued to work with partners to reduce ASB/fires in December by completing visual audits and removing fly tipping waste. LFRS also received several referrals for Fire Intervention Response Education Scheme (FIRES) from Lancashire Constabulary, Rossendale Borough Council and Whitworth High School.

Western area has continued to support Weeton army barracks and the 55 refugee families who had been relocated to the UK. The CFS team worked alongside the barracks personnel, family liaison officer, Salvation Army, and Weeton Primary School to engage with the refugee families and offer further support. Initiatives included presentations covering Ramadan safety (loose clothing & cooking), Lancashire Refugee (Service user) and 2-minute bedroom fire video. LFRS delivered a presentation and distributed literature translated into Pushto and Farsi. Additional to this, LFRS staff and members of the community distributed 30 Qurans, prayer mats and modest clothing to the families. Engagement continues with the barracks, offering ongoing support to the refugees' families.

Western CFS team/Operational staff supported the Salvation Army in their Christmas appeal. The aim of the appeal was to provide children with a gift at Christmas. The Salvation Army received over 2500 referrals for children across the area. Western CFS supported by storing and distributing presents to local children. CFS were able to offer signposting support, along with Home Fire Safety Checks (HFSCs) for vulnerable families. This initiative has certainly strengthened relations especially with the refugee families and has allowed us to provide presents and vital fire safety information.

LFRS identified an increase in Unwanted Fire Signals (UWFS) within the residential accommodation at Royal Preston Hospital. Central CFS have carried out some great partnership/community work and education to reduce the number of these incidents.

Equality, Diversity & Inclusion – County Councillor Zamir Khan

The activity which LFRS continues to contribute to in relation to EDI remains broad and varied.

Colleagues from the Service presented a Master Class for Senior Leaders within Fire and Rescue Services on the menopause.

Members of the Race and Religion Group attended the Windrush Centre and attended a workshop development event on the black experience; this will be used to influence the development of the Services EDI action plan.

Members of the Disability Group are working on the development of an accessibility booklet in relation to the estate, so that information is available in relation to the accessibility of our buildings.

Numerous activities across Lancashire have taken place within the Districts in relation to supporting refugees to be safe, including an event organised by the Princes Trust at Stanley Park which identified 100 young people who were not currently in full-time education or training, and at other key locations where refugee communities have recently settled, offering advice on enjoying a safe day out on the coast, water safety messages, using barbeques safely and Ramadan Safety.

Health, Wellbeing & Climate Change – County Councillor John Singleton

Climate Change and Environment

As mentioned in the last update, we held a Climate Fresk workshop at Service Headquarters in November, with a facilitator from 'With Many Roots'. The session was well attended by Environmental Champions and representatives from HR, Property Department, ICT, Comms and Service Improvement. Feedback was excellent both in person and in the days and weeks following the workshop via the online questionnaire.

Some excerpts from the comments:

- I've already told many colleagues how excellent it was.
- This would be useful for all colleagues, but it was interesting to note the most senior operational member on the course was a crew manager.
- More people need to understand this - especially those with a view to change things.
- I think it is an awareness that everyone needs to have and understand.
- I think the training maybe useful out on station and to higher ranking officers.

We are currently seeking volunteers to attend a second course which will be held on 22 March 2024. The workshop objectives include:

- Having a clearer understanding of the cause and effect of the climate science.
- Having a visual overview of the interconnectedness of the concepts.
- Exploring how you feel about the climate crisis and what actions you might take.
- Testing your own knowledge and assumptions.
- A powerful shared experience your group/team can relate to.

Health and Wellbeing

In November, colleagues came together to record a podcast to coincide with International Men's Day. In Episode 4 of LFRS's podcast; Out of the Ashes, we focussed on men's mental health and the importance of reaching out for support if you or someone you know is struggling. The podcast can be accessed at:

https://outoftheashesstoriesfromlancashire_lfrs.buzzsprout.com/

November also saw the launch of Responding to Trauma and Emotions (RTE). A programme for new members of staff that has been developed in collaboration with The Firefighters Charity. RTE replaces the MIND Distress Management and Self-Care with

a more relevant course, in terms of including suicide awareness for individuals as well as dealing with suicide as a responder. The first two courses in November were for non-operational members of staff, followed by an operationally focused course in December. This is a 12-month pilot after which a full evaluation will be completed.

Finally for this update, to encourage good support networks, we have a quiz each quarter at Service Headquarters. In December this coincided with Christmas Jumper Day and our Health & Wellbeing CFA Champion was there to judge 'Best Christmas Jumper'. Involvement from all staff was fantastic and we had a full turn out, making the competition quite difficult to judge. In the end there were two winners, as well as a winning team for the quiz. The next quiz is scheduled for Easter.



Road Safety – County Councillor Ron Woollam

Road Sense is a Year 6 Road Safety Education Package delivered by LFRS and offered to all primary schools in Lancashire. 6,500 pupils have received the package, so we are on track to deliver to all schools by end of the summer term. Feedback from teachers remains very positive, please see example below:

“Children were engaged due to a fun delivery of serious content.”

The QR code which allows the children to feedback following the delivery of a Road Sense session continues to be completed. All the responses in the free text box have been positive and nearly 100% of respondents answer all the questions correctly.

Biker Down course dates have just been released for February. Planning has started to ensure engagement takes place on the run up to the Easter weekend – the start of the biking season. A letter of thanks was received from Bowker BMW following delivery of a session:

“I just wanted to say a big thank you to you and the team for last night. It's been fantastic to work with you all again this year, as the feedback and engagement from attendees is always inspirational to us as a company.”

The pre and post questionnaire maintains very positive feedback about the session. One of the questions the attendees are asked is around their confidence to remove a motorcycle helmet following a road traffic collision. The scale they use is 1-5 (1 not confident – 5 very confident). Prior to the session the average rating is 2.4 but increases to 4.7 following the session. We also ask for free text feedback:

“Very informative! Will definitely tell others to come along! Thank you!”

Wasted Lives the pre and new driver education package is seeing an increase in bookings with around 2000 students from Blackpool and Fylde College receiving the input on the run up to the Christmas break. The college did a short evaluation of the

delivery and 95% of students reported it had raised their awareness of not driving safely. They also provided some positive free text feedback:

“It got me to learn what not to do and what to do to drive safely. the presentation was great and the activity was good as I got to communicate on my opinions.”

Road Safety week was a very busy week of delivery across Lancashire. Both Community Safety Advisors and Operational Fire Crews were involved in organising and attending events as well as delivering Road Safety Education. One of the events that took place in Lancaster continued to focus on Tyre Safety following on from the internal campaign in October. 44% of cars that were checked were found to have 2 or more borderline or illegal tyres. This highlighted the need for this type of event and was well received by members of the public.



Business risk

Whilst no formal obligation is placed on the Authority to have Champions, effective utilisation of such roles offers a number of benefits.

Sustainability or Environmental Impact

The Member Champion role provides leadership on environmental issues and assists in engaging Authority members in strategic objectives relating to protecting the environment.

Equality and Diversity Implications

The Member Champion role provides leadership on equality and diversity issues and assists in engaging Authority members in strategic objectives relating to equality and diversity.

Data Protection (GDPR)

Will the proposal(s) involve the processing of personal data? N

If the answer is yes, please contact a member of the Democratic Services Team to assist with the appropriate exemption clause for confidential consideration under part 2 of the agenda.

HR implications

Some Member and Officer time commitments.

Financial implications

Activities are within budget.

Legal implications

None identified.

Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985**List of background papers**

Paper:

Date:

Contact: ACFO Jon Charters

Reason for inclusion in Part 2 if appropriate: N/A