

Lancashire Combined Fire Authority

Meeting to be held on 16 September 2024

Corporate Safety, Health and Environment Policy Document

(Appendices 1 and 2 refers)

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Executive Summary

Under Section 2(3) of the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, employers must prepare, and where necessary revise, a written statement of health and safety policy. The existing safety, health and environment policy document, which was last considered by the Authority in September 2021, has been recently reviewed, amended as required, and is now ready for approval.

As the health, safety and environment functions are managed in a similar way it is considered appropriate for the Authority to declare its intent for health, safety, wellbeing and environment in the same document.

As the employing body, the policy document is 'owned' by the Combined Fire Authority (CFA) and requires endorsement by both the Chair of the Authority and Chief Fire Officer (CFO). Following approval, it will be displayed on all Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service (LFRS) premises.

The revised corporate Safety, Health and Environment (SHE) Policy is attached as Appendix 1 and the associated Equality Impact Assessment as Appendix 2, both documents having undergone a full 3-year review by the SHE Department.

Recommendation(s)

The Authority is asked to endorse the revised policy.

The Authority is asked to support the new Chief Fire Officer re-signing the commitment on appointment, or bringing back a revised policy should it be deemed necessary on their review.

Information

Every organisation that employs five or more staff must have a written Health and Safety Policy. The statement of general policy on health and safety at work sets out your commitment to managing health and safety effectively, and what you want to achieve.

In Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service (LFRS) the health & safety, environmental and employee wellbeing commitments are combined into one Safety, Health and Environment Policy. This policy is reviewed at least every three years reiterating and reinforcing the principles of continual improvement for our Management System.

In August 2024, the SHE Department Team have undertaken a full review of the SHE Policy as part of the 3-yearly review cycle. Following the current guidance on structure for a health and safety policy from the Health and Safety Executive (HSE), the latest version of our policy has been restructured including more detail on roles and responsibilities and our arrangements for addressing key elements of organisational risk.

In addition to using guidance from the HSE, the review of our SHE Policy has reflected the guidance provided within the Fire and Rescue Authorities, Health, Safety and Welfare Framework. The framework identifies the following guiding principles of health, safety and welfare in a Fire and Rescue Authority:

- Clear and positive safety leadership at Fire and Rescue Authority and principal officer level.
- Fire and Rescue Authority and principal officer level visibility and promotion of safety leadership in order to set a positive safety culture throughout the Authority, with at least one named officer taking lead responsibility for the safety management process at an organisational level.
- Recognition that management is accountable and has constant active engagement in the Authority's operations, accepting prime responsibility for accident and ill health prevention, including monitoring of employee health.
- Recognition that employee workplace health and safety representatives operating in partnership with management are an important part of realising health, safety and welfare benefits.
- Engagement of the workforce, encouraging and establishing upward and downward communication systems and appropriate management structures in the promotion and achievement of a good health and safety culture.
- The personal responsibilities of individuals are clear and health, safety and welfare is embedded into all activities and not seen as separate.
- The scrutiny of the health, safety and welfare management system must be an identified function of the fire authority as the primary employer.
- Well-established management and incident command arrangements are in place for controlling the operational risks to firefighters.
- Appropriate resources are made available to ensure a high standard of safety management, incident command and the integration of good health, safety and welfare management within operational and business decisions.
- Provision of high quality training to ensure all personnel are competent to perform their roles and to make appropriate operational decisions.
- Monitoring safety performance and incident command based on both leading and lagging indicators is central to ensuring the operational risks are being effectively managed.
- Ensuring internal standards and safe operational procedures aim to optimise the balance between risks and benefits – which does not mean avoiding risks but managing them responsibly on the basis of likelihood and severity.

Business risk

The corporate Safety, Health and Environment Policy is a key document which informs all organisational activity and seeks to ensure that the requirements of the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act and associated legislation together with Environmental Acts and legislation are met.

Any failure to maintain the currency of the Policy and supporting arrangements may endanger and impact upon both LFRS staff, the public and the environment, leaving the Authority open to potential legal action, economic sanction and public criticism.

For additional assessment of LFRS performance against its health, safety and environmental responsibilities, LFRS continues to hold ISO certification for ISO 45001 and ISO 14001, having a clear policy statement supported by the Authority is a key part of compliance to the ISO standards.

Sustainability or Environmental Impact

The Safety, Health and Environment Policy seeks to reduce the impact LFRS has on the environment and natural resources and looks at ways of adapting to the changing climate.

Equality and Diversity Implications

An Equality Impact Assessment has been undertaken and the findings attached at Appendix 2.

Data Protection (GDPR)

Will the proposal(s) involve the processing of personal data? **Y/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

The SHE Policy applies to all LFRS staff and forms part of the induction process for new starters.

Financial implications

No direct financial implications arise directly from the SHE Policy.

Legal implications

The Health and Safety at Work etc. Act, together with supporting regulations and guidance detail compliance responsibilities for LFRS. Similar environmental legislation is in place which directly impacts on LFRS. All relevant legislation identified by the SHE Department to ensure that LFRS remains as a minimum legally compliant.

Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985

List of background papers

Paper:	Date:
Minutes of CFA meeting	September 2006
Minutes of CFA meeting	28 April 2008
Corporate Health and Safety Policy Document	20 June 2011
Corporate Safety, Health and Environment Policy Document	9 September 2013
Corporate Safety, Health and Environment Policy Document	19 September 2016
Corporate Safety, Health and Environment Policy Document	18 December 2017
Corporate Safety, Health and Environment Policy Document	16 September 2021

Date: 20/08/2024

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