

Lancashire Combined Fire Authority

Meeting to be held on 16 September 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 15 September 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 – County Councillor Matthew Salter
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion – Councillor Zamir Khan
- Health and Wellbeing – County Councillor Hasina Khan
- Road Safety – County Councillor Fred Jackson

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 – County Councillor Matthew Salter

There were lots of positive awareness activities completed by area staff to support World Drowning Prevention Day on 25 July 2024. This included safety demonstrations, training drills, checking safety equipment and engaging with the public at known risk sites. The campaign message was “Anyone can drown, no one should”, and LFRS worked with the Lancashire Water Safety Partnership to light up several landmarks across Lancashire blue. These included Blackpool Tower, Fleetwood Marine Hall, Ormskirk Clock Tower, Skelmersdale Light Cube, Lytham Windmill, Rivington Pike and Chorley Town Hall and Clock Tower. Prevention Support also took part in a BBC Radio Lancashire interview with Lancashire County Council’s (LCC’s) Outdoor Provision Officer on the day.

Pennine staff delivered water safety education sessions to a group of young people who were taking part in performing arts and drama. The sessions were interactive, and they used a rope rescue pack to visualise how a swift water rescue operates. The group acted out a potential risk situation and were given guidance from staff on how to survive by staying afloat, not to panic and raise the alarm by using the What 3 Words app.

Lancaster Community Safety Team have been working in partnership with their local representative for the Royal National Institute for the Blind (RNIB). They have worked together to try and improve the delivery of home fire safety checks (HFSC) for people who are blind or visually impaired. The team participated in an interactive awareness session from RNIB and experienced what it was like to lose their sight by wearing 'goggles' adapted for different vision conditions. The session was very informative and has given the team some useful techniques to improve the HFSC experience for people with visual impairments.

Passing Out Parades took place for all Cadet units across the service in July and sessions will resume in September after the summer break. Fire Cadets from Lancashire joined representatives from other North West Fire Services in a competition day at Greater Manchester FRS Safety Centre in Bury. Activities included a series of timed drills competing against each other for points and Burnley's team came second.

Staff from Central area attended the Preston Disability Pride event which took place in Preston City centre. They set up a stall on the market square with a variety of agencies along with One Fylde Radio. It was a perfect opportunity for staff to engage with the community, provide fire safety advice and raise awareness of the Home Fire Safety Check service. The team also spoke to several people who were interested in working for LFRS and recruitment leaflets were issued during the event.

Following the tragedy of the Southport knife attacks, where three young girls sadly lost their lives, the staff from Chorley worked with Lancashire Constabulary to deliver some community reassurance to the residents in an area where the suspect lived.

The police reported several instances where some residents had been subjected to threatening verbal abuse which had left them feeling concerned for their safety. During a week of reassurance visits, all properties were offered a Home Fire Safety Check and received fire safety information. Feedback from residents and the Police was very positive and HFSC visits were completed by the time the cordon was lifted on 21 August.

Equality, Diversity & Inclusion – County Councillor Zamir Khan MBE

Over the last quarter, representatives from the Service have been actively engaging with employees and communities in various ways.

To encourage more women into leadership positions within Grey Book roles, the Women in the Fire Service group at LFRS are hosting an Incident Command Awareness Day in September at the Leadership and Development Centre. The day will include career planning and confidence building, as well as incident command awareness and leadership development support.

The Service received the Employer Recognition Gold Award for its work in supporting Defence People objectives. This includes employing serving and former members of the Armed Forces community and demonstrating flexibility towards training and mobilisation commitments for Reservists and Cadet Force adult volunteers.

Further to the tragic incident in Southport in July, representatives from the Service worked with partners as part of a multi-agency response to keep communities safe. Members of staff were encouraged to report any acts of hate crime they experienced to the police and via the Accident Reporting Procedure. Members of staff were also offered signposting to support.

The procurement process to appoint a contractor to undertake improvements at Blackpool (W30) Station is progressing. In addition, some interim improvements have been made to Incident Welfare Facilities in relation to the provision of sanitary disposal bins, further to the development of a longer-term plan.

Further to the commencement of the Hajj pilgrimage in June, the ACFO Jon Charters and community safety advisor Faz Patel promoted 'Safety During Hajj' to listeners locally, nationally and internationally via Pendle radio.

On 1 August 2024 HMICFRS produced a report on the Handling of Misconduct in Fire and Rescue Services which highlights some issues in the Services inspected and made a series of recommendations. The Service has completed a gap analysis which will be monitored via the EDIC Steering Group, which oversees the work of the Service in relation to EDI and culture. A progress report will be reported to the Fire Authority via the Equality Diversity and Inclusion reporting arrangements.

Health, Wellbeing & Climate Change – County Councillor Hasina Khan

Climate Change and Environment



2024 has seen Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service participate in No Mow May for the first time. A small sign, designed by our Corporate Comms Department (shown to the right here), was installed in grass areas at Bacup, Bamber Bridge, Blackpool, Garstang, Preston and Rawtenstall.

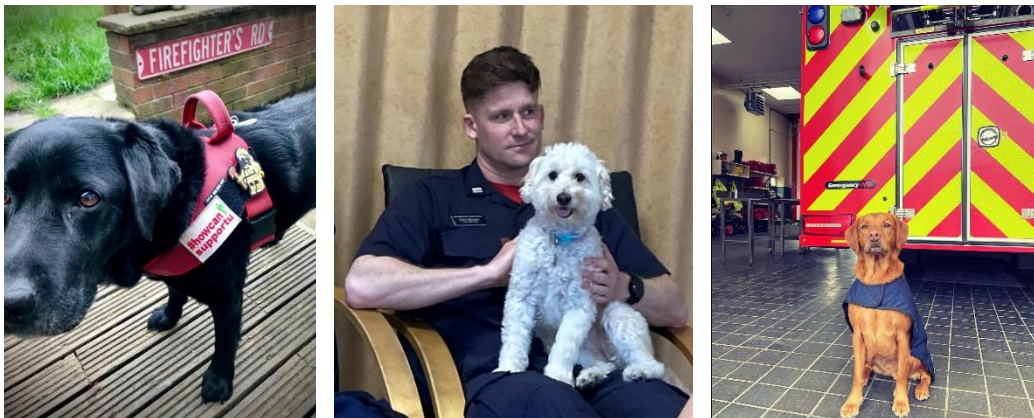
Property Department made arrangements with their grounds maintenance contractor to ensure that, firstly these areas were not mowed in May, but also to make sure the appropriate 'mow and collect' is carried out in June to tidy these areas up again.

Not only did our Environmental Champions and other staff on station help to support the No Mow May, we were very pleased to have a visit to Blackpool Fire Station by our then CFA Member Champion for Environment, County Councillor John Singleton.

We will be looking to get involved in No Mow May again next year and hope to roll this out to even more stations.

Health and Wellbeing

Throughout April 2024, visits were made to stations across the Service to promote the wellbeing resources available to LFRS staff. The visits were supported by our three Wellbeing Support Dogs (WSD); WSD Bronte, WSD Poppy and WSD Benson; who all enjoyed spending time with the crews/support staff, helping them to relax and think about their wellbeing.



The main Wellness Events Calendar item throughout May and June 2024 was the Divider Challenge. Fifteen colleagues took part in the challenge, raising £734 for the Fire Fighters Charity along the way. The Divider Challenge is a way to create awareness and encourages people to talk about their mental health, and to break down the stigmas associated with mental health issues.

The Challenge reinforces the message that it is ok to speak up and say, "I'm not ok". The individual wears the Divider for the whole time of the 'wearing' period, with a few exceptions for when it could pose a safety risk to wear it:

- Sleeping
- Driving
- Responding/on the incident ground - it can be worn on duty as the cuff can be released quickly and left at station/office etc.
- Showering/bathing
- Exercising

The Divider becomes a physical, visual and tangible representation of the invisible burden of mental health so many of us experience. Below are a few images of the colleagues who took part in the Divider Challenge.



Road Safety – County Councillor Fred Jackson

Road Sense is a Year 6 Road Safety Education Package delivered by LFRS and offered to all primary schools in Lancashire. 17,300 pupils have received the package throughout the academic year. A working group has been established to update the package for the new academic year. The key messages will remain the same, the slides will just be refreshed. Feedback from teachers remains very positive, please see example below:

“Crew were brilliant with the children and kept them all engaged and also made it appropriate for their level! Thank you very much.”

The Biker Down team had a very busy month delivering courses. They were invited to deliver at Blackpool International Tattoo Convention which was a success. Courses were run on both Saturday and Sunday. Staff from both Greater Manchester and Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service attended to observe as they are looking to start delivering Biker Down. There was also a bike show and exhibit section which complemented the running of our courses. The course feedback continues to be positive. A recent example below:

“Excellent training event and very enjoyable / informative. Trainers were knowledgeable and helpful.”



Alive to Drive Road Safety Events continue to take place over the summer with the most recent event taking place in Blackpool on the Comedy Carpet. The event was supported by Northwest Ambulance Service (NWS), National Highways, Blackpool Council, Tyre Safe, Fresh Drivers, Pro Tyre, Blood Bikes and Wincanton. The Road Traffic Collision demonstration that was delivered by Blue Watch was very well received and drew a huge crowd. South Shore Fire Cadets attended and supported the event by promoting car seat safety with the measuring pole, explaining the story behind the crashed car and very importantly handing out e-bike / e-scooter leaflets to everyone who attended on those modes of transport. These events look to provide information for all types of road users.



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