

Lancashire Combined Fire Authority

Monday, 28 April 2025 at 10.30 am in Washington Hall, Leadership and Development Centre, Euxton

Minutes

Present:

N Hennessy (Chair)

Councillors

S Clarke
M Clifford
F De Molfetta
D Howarth
J Hugo
F Jackson
Z Khan MBE

S Morris
D O'Toole
P Rigby
J Shedwick
J Singleton
D Smith
B Yates

85/24	Chair's Welcome and Introduction
	<p>The Chair welcomed members to the meeting and announced that County Councillor D O'Toole was standing down as a County Councillor at this year's county elections. The Chair remarked that Councillor O'Toole had had a spectacular career at both Lancashire County Council and the Combined Fire Authority (CFA). County Councillor D O'Toole joined the CFA in June 2000 and had served 25 years on the Authority, he had chaired the Authority extensively and currently sat on the Planning, Performance, Resources and Appeals Committees and the Member Training and Development and Capital Projects Working Groups. The Chair remarked that County Councillor O'Toole was the epitome of a Conservative, a true gentleman who always acted with honesty and integrity and was very supportive of her as leader of the Labour Group. On behalf of the Authority the Chair thanked County Councillor O'Toole for his service.</p> <p>County Councillor F De Molfetta added that he had worked with County Councillor D O'Toole for many years and he had always promoted the work of the Fire Authority and had the Fire Authority at the heart of everything he had done. They were involved in the development of North-West Fire Control (NWFC) which had now proven to be very successful. Councillor De Molfetta congratulated County Councillor D O'Toole, thanked him for everything he had done for the Fire Authority and wished him good luck for the future.</p> <p>County Councillor J Shedwick echoed the comments of others and remarked that he had worked with County Councillor D O'Toole for a long time and was proud to serve on the authority with him, he expressed his thanks for his service.</p> <p>County Councillor D O'Toole thanked members for their kind words and remarked that his time on the Fire Authority had been very rewarding. There had been four</p>

	<p>Chief Fire Officers (CFOs) during his time on the Authority and he had enjoyed working with them all, along with the Executive Board and the Fire Brigades Union (FBU) representatives. He remarked that he had enjoyed the comradeship with all members from all parties and commented that any disagreements had been managed sensitively and respectfully. County Councillor O'Toole further commented that he had been a Conservative party member since he was 17 years old.</p> <p>The Chair presented County Councillor O'Toole with an award on behalf of the Fire Authority and the CFO presented County Councillor O'Toole with a gift on behalf of the Executive Board.</p> <p>On behalf of the Fire Authority the Chair wished County Councillor T Hurn a speedy recovery following news that he had suffered a heart attack.</p> <p>On behalf of the Fire Authority the Chair expressed her sympathies to County Councillor R Woollam following the news of his wife's passing, following a short illness.</p> <p>On behalf of the Authority, the Chair expressed her thanks to County Councillor P Rigby who was standing down as a County Councillor at this year's county elections, County Councillor Rigby had joined the CFA in March 2021 and the Authority was grateful for his service and dedication.</p> <p>The Chair welcomed County Councillor A Kay back to the Authority.</p> <p>The Chair advised that following the HMICFRS inspection there would be a debrief held this week. The Deputy Chief Fire Officer (DCFO) confirmed that this was not the final results but would give an initial precis of inspection findings but without in-depth detail or final gradings.</p> <p>The Chair updated members on a recent donation by the Service to Ukraine. A national convoy to Ukraine departed on 6 April 2025 and returned on 13 April 2025, Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service (LFRS) donated two fire engines, a 4x4 vehicle and essential rescue equipment as part of a UK-wide humanitarian effort. This was the eighth convoy to Ukraine and included a total of 30 vehicles and over 15,000 pieces of vital equipment which were donated by colleagues from Buckinghamshire, Cheshire, Durham and Darlington, Essex, Hampshire and Isle of Wight, Hereford and Worcester, Humberside, London, Merseyside, Mid and West Wales, Norfolk, Northumberland, South Wales, Staffordshire, Tyne and Wear, West Midlands and West Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Services.</p> <p>The volunteers representing Lancashire included Group Manager (GM) Mark Warwick, Firefighter (FF) Sue Tattersall, Crew Manager (CM) Mark Schofield and CM John Meehan, and Adam Flynn and Dominic Aughton (Fleet and Engineering Services).</p> <p>In total, in eight convoys since the invasion began, 150 fire and rescue vehicles and 300,000 pieces of firefighting equipment had been donated to Ukraine.</p>
86/24	Apologies for Absence

	Apologies were received from County Councillors U Arif, P Britcliffe, T Hurn, A Kay, H Khan, M Pattison, S Serridge and R Woollam and Councillors G Baker and M Desai.
87/24	Disclosure of Pecuniary and non-Pecuniary Interests
	None received.
88/24	Minutes of Previous Meeting
	<p>The Assistant Chief Fire Officer (ACFO) advised members of a correction to the minutes, the final paragraph within resolution 80/24 (page 22 of the agenda pack) made reference to wildfire events happening more frequently, this was corrected to flooding events happening more frequently.</p> <p>Resolved: - That the Minutes of the CFA held on 17 February 2025 be confirmed and signed by the Chair.</p>
89/24	Minutes of meeting Wednesday 5 March 2025 of Performance Committee
	Resolved: - That the proceedings of the Performance Committee held on 5 March 2025 be noted.
90/24	Minutes of meeting Wednesday 26 March 2025 of Resources Committee
	Resolved: - That the proceedings of the Resources Committee held on 26 March 2025 be noted.
91/24	Minutes of meeting Thursday 27 March 2025 of Audit Committee
	Resolved: - That the proceedings of the Audit Committee held on 27 March 2025 be noted.
92/24	Members Allowance Scheme and Indices
	<p>The Clerk to the Authority presented the report to members.</p> <p>The Members' Allowance Scheme had not been reviewed since June 2016, since then there had been further changes to the economic climate in the delivery of emergency and public services and a marked increase in statutory and operational obligations to ensure best value and efficiency, efficacy and effectiveness within the current climate in which the Authority operated to govern the delivery of emergency services. Some proposed amendments had been made to bring the Scheme up to date and were included in appendix 1 of the report (pages 77 – 85 of the agenda pack).</p> <p>Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003 also permitted a Members' Allowance Scheme to make provision for an annual adjustment of</p>

	<p>allowances by reference to an index which must be reviewed every 4 years. Whilst this review would not ordinarily be required until 2026, it was considered appropriate to review the indices in line with the proposal to change the Scheme wording. Members were asked to consider whether to continue to use the existing indices.</p> <p>In response to a question from Councillor J Hugo in relation to the system to claim expenses, the Director of Corporate Services (DoCS) advised that a paper based system had been developed and could be introduced at the next Strategy Meeting, however, members could continue to use the current electronic system if they preferred. The Chair remarked that claim forms were previously brought to meetings to allow members to receive support if needed.</p> <p>Resolved: - That the Authority approved the proposed changes to the Scheme and also the indices used and to continue with the existing indices for a further four-year period.</p>
93/24	<p>Urgent Decision Arrangements at Election Time</p>
	<p>The Clerk to the Authority presented the report to members.</p> <p>The Authority needed to ensure there were adequate arrangements to enable any urgent decisions to be taken in the event of the Chair and the Vice-Chair retiring from office as Lancashire County Councillors, in line with the requirements of the Local Government Act 1972 and the date of the Combined Fire Authority's Annual Meeting scheduled for 23 June 2025.</p> <p>Contingency planning was vital to the resilience of the Service and in respect of the overarching governance obligations of the Authority. The Authority was asked to Authorise the Chief Fire Officer (CFO) and the Clerk to the Authority to take any urgent decisions upon any matters arising, for this short period. The relevant period would run from the fourth day after the ordinary day of the Lancashire County Council elections and the Lancashire County Council Annual Meeting, in the event of the Chair and Vice-Chair not being re-elected.</p> <p>In response to a question from Councillor J Hugo in relation to the election not impacting on unitary authorities, the Clerk advised that although it was not included within the constitution of the authority, the CFA was essentially dissolved during the period between election and the home authorities AGM and unitary members could raise any concerns directly with the CFO.</p> <p>Resolved: - That the Authority authorised the Chief Fire Officer and the Clerk to the Authority to take any urgent decisions upon any matters arising.</p>
94/24	<p>Member Champion Activity Report</p>
	<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 – County Councillor John Singleton • Equality, Diversity and Inclusion – Councillor Zamir Khan • Health and Wellbeing – County Councillor Hasina Khan • Road Safety – Councillor Fred Jackson <p>Reports relating to the activity of the Member Champions were provided on a regular basis to the Authority. This report related to activity for the period up to 27 April 2025. During this period all had undertaken their respective role in accordance with the defined terms of reference.</p> <p>County Councillor D O'Toole remarked that the Member Champions were outstanding and did a fantastic job.</p> <p>County Councillor J Singleton remarked that it was also important to recognise the importance of ongoing prevention work carried out alongside firefighting.</p> <p>The Chair expressed her thanks to the Member Champions.</p> <p>Resolved: - That the Authority noted the report and acknowledged the work of the respective Champions.</p>
95/24	<p>Fire Protection Reports</p> <p>The Deputy Chief Fire Officer (DCFO) presented the report which summarised Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service (LFRS) prosecutions pertaining to fire safety offences under the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety Order) 2005.</p> <p>LFRS currently had two cases relating to the same premises within the court system. These related to two responsible persons at a care and nursing home. One case had been moved to sentencing on 7 May 2025 at the Magistrates Court. The second case had a dismissal hearing on 24 March 2025 at Crown Court. The dismissal hearing application was not upheld with the defendant now due at a pre-trial hearing on the 6 June 2025 at Crown Court prior to trial, set for the 28 July 2025.</p> <p>One further case was set for trial on the 14 July 2025 relating to student accommodation.</p> <p>LFRS had recently issued summons for two cases, one relating to a commercial car parts/garage premises and the other relating to two House in Multiple Occupation (HMO) premises owned by the same person.</p> <p>Protection teams continued to investigate and build case files in relation to sixteen premises where offences were believed to have been committed under the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety Order) 2005.</p> <p>The DCFO advised members that this was testimony to the work of Area Manager (AM) Matt Hamer and his team.</p> <p>Members noted that there had been three arson convictions during the quarter which resulted in prison sentences totalling over six years.</p>

	<p>There were another 14 live cases ongoing through the Criminal Justice System that the service was continuing to progress.</p> <p>The DCFO advised members that this was testimony to the work of the Incident Intelligence Officer (IIO) Team working with Police colleagues.</p> <p>Resolved: That the report be noted.</p>
96/24	<p>Operational Incidents of Interest</p>
	<p>The Assistant Chief Fire Officer (ACFO) presented the report which provided Members with information relating to operational incidents of note. As the operational period had been very busy, the report detailed only the larger deployments or more complex incidents. As a result, some incidents that Members had been made aware of locally, may not have formed part of the report. Full details of the following incidents were provided in the report:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commercial building fire in Lancaster (8/2/25) • Derelict building Fire in Skelmersdale (19/2/25) • Domestic building fire in Barnoldswick (25/2/25) • Electric car fire in Haslingden (4/3/25) • Electric LGV fire in Chorley (4/3/25) • Domestic building fire in Preston (9/3/25) • Rescue of persons from water in Lancaster (15/3/25) • Building fire in Blackpool (27/3/25) • Road Traffic Collision in Clitheroe (30/3/25) • Commercial building fire in Blackburn (31/3/25) <p>The ACFO advised members that the incident involving a commercial building fire in Blackburn on 31 March 2025 was a significant incident with a recently fitted drencher system which assisted in limiting damage to the building and business. A presentation on this incident would be brought to the next CFA meeting in June.</p> <p>Resolved: That the Authority noted the report.</p>
97/24	<p>Member Complaints</p>
	<p>The Monitoring Officer confirmed that there had been no complaints since the last meeting.</p> <p>Resolved: - That the current position be noted.</p>
98/24	<p>Date of Next Meeting</p>
	<p>The next meeting of the Authority would be held on Monday 23 June 2025 at 10:30am at the Leadership and Development Centre, Euxton.</p>

**LFRS HQ
Fulwood**

**M Nolan
Clerk to CFA**