

# Lancashire Combined Fire Authority

## Planning Committee

Meeting to be held on 18 November 2024

### Emergency Cover Review

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#### **Executive Summary**

This report provides an update on the Emergency Cover Review (ECR) 2022-25 implementation, outlining the work that is ongoing and has been completed to date.

With many ECR workstreams now concluded or in the final phase of implementation, all ongoing workstreams are being managed as projects through programme boards. It is proposed that any future updates on work associated with the ECR is brought through the relevant programme board or by exception to Planning Committee. Resources committee will be updated in relation to the capital programme, which does impact on some of the projects within the ECR.

#### **Recommendation**

Planning Committee are requested to note and endorse this final update in this format.

### **Background**

Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service (LFRS) is required to review emergency response arrangements periodically to ensure that provision remains effective and commensurate with our dynamic risk profile. This process is a robust assessment of historic data and emergent risk and is delivered in the format of an Emergency Cover Review (ECR).

The changes identified in the ECR 2022-25 reflect the most effective and efficient use of resources for the whole of Lancashire. Lancashire's Combined Fire Authority agreed the proposed changes on 19 December 2022. The changes have resulted in LFRS:

- Maintaining all 39 fire stations and 58 fire appliances
- Maintaining our outstanding response standards
- Creating an increase in overall firefighter jobs by eight

An ECR implementation plan was developed with five key workstreams, updates on the workstreams can be found below:

#### **Introduce more resilient and flexible crewing arrangements**

As previously reported, the implementation of all the proposed change of duty systems and establishment numbers, with the exception of Penwortham, took place on the 1

March 2024. The changes in duty system at Penwortham will be worked through as part of the Preston Area review project which is ongoing.

An evaluation of the implementation is underway to ensure both positive practice and areas of learning are captured to inform any future emergency cover reviews.

### **Optimise emergency cover through dynamic cover software**

The dynamic cover software is being used widely internally to monitor coverage and plan relief strategies during incidents and on a day-to-day basis within the Command Support Room.

The project's current focus is on the implementation and use at North West Fire Control, empowering Control Room Operators to make coverage and relief moves based on real-time risk and demand.

Extensive modelling work has been undertaken to better understand the impact and use of the software once fully implemented. Over 200 real-time activity periods have been modelled, these have included when we have seen high demand on resources such as large, protracted incidents including periods when resource availability has been reduced. Analysing the predicted coverage move results, we can determine that overall standby numbers will broadly remain similar, however both the deploying appliance and the standby fire station destination will likely change. This will see us move away from traditional static pre-defined key stations to dynamically determining cover moves based on risk, current demand, and live resource availability. In summary, using the dynamic cover software as intended will provide Lancashire with better emergency cover based on risk, demand and resource availability.

Extensive consultation took place on all aspects of the ECR which included the dynamic coverage software. Virtual engagement sessions have recently been held with On Call units, which included demonstrating the tool and likely impacts to cover moves, accepting that by their very nature moves are dynamic based on what is happening across the county at a point in time. Further engagement sessions are due to be scheduled with the most impacted stations and units and Trade Unions have been fully engaged. A phased implementation will commence from January 2025, aiming to have full implementation by the end of March. Essentially, this moves the Service away from traditional key stations to a more intuitive, risk-based deployment of resources using the latest technology and software so that our resources have the best disposition based on current risk, demand and available resource.

### **Strengthen our response to climate change emergencies**

#### **Investing in Four Fire Appliances with Off-Road Capabilities**

With the re-baselining of the larger vehicle specification, new estimated timelines have been developed. Project groups are established with staff engagement to ensure the specifications are developed with our teams to deliver the most suitable appliances to meet the changing risk profile. It is anticipated a procurement process for 1 large and 1 small climate change appliance will take place in the next quarter, with both the larger and smaller appliances due to be delivered and rolled out in early 2026.

The vehicles will be evaluated prior to the potential purchase of two further vehicles (one large and one small).

Both projects are being managed through the Service Delivery Change Programme Board and will therefore be reported through Capital Projects Programme Board.

### **Introduce Flood Water Incident Managers and Flood Water Tactical Advisors**

Flood Water Incident Managers and a Flood Water Tactical Advisor are all now trained and in place for operational deployment.

### **Strengthen firefighting and rescue capabilities in high-rise and commercial buildings**

#### **Introduce a 45m Aerial Ladder Platform (ALP)**

Members have previously been made aware of the delays to this project due to supply chain issues. Emergency One, the company who won the contract, have agreed a new delivery timeline with the Service and final delivery is expected in April 2025, with a period of training before being fully operational.

This project is being managed through the Service Delivery Change Programme Board and will therefore be reported through Capital Projects Programme Board.

#### **Invest in two Additional Water Towers**

The Water Towers are due to be rolled out in Spring 2025. They will be located at St Annes and Lancaster.

This project is also being managed through the Service Delivery Change Programme Board and will therefore be reported through Capital Projects Programme Board.

### **Broaden on-call firefighting capabilities to strengthen operational response**

A significant amount of work continues within our On Call improvement programme. Ongoing work in relation to On Call staff supporting specialist appliance resilience including the two new Water Towers, and On Call unit's in Southern area supporting the deployment of our Water Bowser.

### **Business risk**

Production of the ECR is a business-critical planning function. LFRS must demonstrate a timely review of response arrangements in line with National Framework guidance issued by central government.

### **Environmental impact**

A key driver of the ECR process is to align to our climate change response plan. This will drive our operational response through speed of attack and ensuring the most effective and efficient resource is deployed with the aim of reducing harm to the environment.

### **Equality and diversity implications**

A full Equality Impact Assessment has been completed alongside an independent third-party specialist to ensure any proposed changes do not impact negatively upon Lancashire's diverse community or LFRS' workforce.

### **HR implications**

HR managed the changes of duty systems and associated operational resources through relevant processes including consultation and engagement.

### **Financial implications**

The associated training and property expenditure due to the implementation of the ECR, were managed within existing budgets. Any capital spends such as new appliances or dynamic cover software have allocated funds and are governed through individual projects reporting into the appropriate programme board.

### **Legal implications**

LFRS must demonstrate a timely review of response arrangements in line with National Framework guidance issued by central government.

## **Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985**

### **List of background papers**

Paper:

Date:

Contact:

Reason for inclusion in Part 2 if appropriate: