



Fire Brigades Union

Region Five

Lancashire



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LANCASHIRE COMBINED FIRE AUTHORITY BUDGET CONSULTATION

The Fire Brigades Union in Lancashire recognise that Lancashire Combined Fire Authority is in a better position than most to deal with the continued underfunding of the Fire & Rescue Service by central government. The operational front line has been cut vastly over the past 10 years or so, with swathes of our members now working an 84-hour week. It is hoped that no more Grey Book posts will be lost to efficiency savings due to this governments underfunding.

Capital Budget – Points to note

Vehicles - The Fire Brigades Union welcomes the continued investment in the vehicle, building and IT replacement programs. We agree with the ‘*smoothing out*’ of vehicle replacement as a common sense measure. Particularly important, we feel, is the replacement of the two Mobile Fire Stations / Incident Command Units over the next couple of years. Incident command is vital to firefighter safety and it is imperative that LFRS take this opportunity to learn from past mistakes, by ensure that not only is the latest Information and Communications Technology, hardware and software, incorporated into the vehicles but also to ensure the correct vehicle body is purchased in the first instance. We feel it is important that LFRS utilise competent ICU users from C52 Fulwood and E71 Blackburn by offering representation on the replacement project team.

Operational Equipment - We support the replacement of BA ancillary equipment such as radios, TIC’s and Telemetry equipment. We feel it is vitally important to get this right by understanding the lessons to be learned from previous investigation reports into firefighter fatalities.

Buildings – Subject to the outcomes of the next Emergency Cover Review, we support the potential replacement of Preston fire station, which is looking tired. We would encourage LFRS to engage with staff by involving them in the design planning of the new station at the earliest opportunity.

Revenue Budget – The FBU note the following;

The FBU reluctantly support a 2% increase in Council Tax and welcome the scope to *“utilise £4.7m reserves that could be used to meet the funding gap across the remainder of the four-year settlement period, up to 31/3/2020”* as a way of offsetting and lessening the impact of Central Government cuts.

Yours Sincerely

Ian McGill
FBU Brigade Secretary