

### Welcome to our annual service plan

At Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service we strive to deliver the best possible services in our communities. Every day we respond to emergencies, visit homes, businesses and schools, and work behind the scenes to make Lancashire safer.

Concerted efforts to prevent fires in recent years have significantly reduced the number of fires people experience; at the same time the types of emergencies affecting communities are evolving. Maintaining the highest levels of operational competence against this backdrop remains a firm priority.

We rigorously review our operational activity, learning from the smallest events to the most significant incidents to ensure continuous improvement. Applying learning from national events and the sector further afield, at all levels of operational response, will continue to strengthen the Service's ability to meet future challenges.

A programme of improvements to support on-call firefighters will continue to broaden development opportunities, improve retention, and increase emergency cover. This includes a more agile delivery model for training to make it easier for on-call crews to acquire and maintain skills following staff feedback.

Extensive reform to fire safety and building control standards has taken place to make buildings safer for occupants following the tragic Grenfell Tower fire in 2017. We have transformed our fire protection services to deliver these changes expertly and will continue to support local businesses to comply with legislation and reduce the risk of fire in their premises.

At the centre of all our plans are highly-skilled, dedicated people who serve Lancashire with pride. Investing in their safety and wellbeing is a longstanding priority and we remain committed to ensuring activity in this area reflects progress in research, methods, and technology.

Effective leadership at every level of the Service is crucial to sustain our strong organisational culture and achieve our goals. Supporting leaders to engage and energise their teams, uphold standards, and nurture talent is a key area of focus.

Financial challenges lie ahead to maintain our services and meet vital investment needs. We are focussed on becoming more flexible and dynamic in how we use our resources, creating capacity, and improving productivity. One of the ways we will achieve this is by using data, digital and technology to work smarter, freeing-up time to concentrate our energies on the activities that have the greatest impacts.

A new staff efficiency forum is being established this year to pull together ideas from across the organisation, encourage innovation, and empower people to initiate better ways of working that reduce unnecessary demand, improve efficiency and increase productivity.

The Service has a strong track record of balancing the budget and delivering the best possible services that represent excellent value for money for the people of Lancashire. We remain strongly committed to this priority.

Jon Charters

Chief Fire Officer

### Valuing our people so they can focus on making Lancashire safer

The Service relies on the collective expertise and experience of its staff to achieve our purpose of making Lancashire safer. Investing in their training, development, facilities, and wellbeing is at the core of creating a workplace where everyone feels valued and empowered to make a positive contribution whatever their role.

### Create an organisational culture where diversity is encouraged and valued

Our STRIVE values and the national Core Code of Ethics guide the professional behaviours of all our staff. We are proud of our culture in Lancashire and the high levels of trust the public have in our Service. However, we remain focussed on building a more inclusive service where diversity is nurtured and valued.

We will:

- Attract talent and promote opportunities to diversify the workforce, aligned to the People Strategy.
- Implement the Worker Protection (Amendment of Equality Act 2010) Act 2023, taking measures to prevent sexual harassment.
- Develop a professional standards function to oversee the investigation of misconduct concerns in a fair and transparent way.

### Develop leaders who build and maintain trust in the Service

Leaders who role model and actively promote an environment that creates and maintains trust throughout the Service, engage others, energise them to overcome barriers, welcome feedback, and challenge poor behaviour if it occurs.

We will:

- Deliver leadership development training to crew managers to support them in promoting a culture where everyone can thrive.
- Ensure leaders at every level are sufficiently informed to engage with their teams, so all our staff feel well informed, involved, and listened to.

### Tailor training and development for on-call firefighters

We are focused on giving on-call firefighters the best training and development that supports them to deliver the best possible services. Following staff feedback, we are focussed on adapting how and where we deliver training to on-call crews to make it easier to acquire and maintain skills and knowledge.

We will:

- Develop a more agile delivery model for some elements of on-call training, improving the quality and accessibility of training and development, and creating efficiencies in the provision of mandatory training.
- Support the acquirement of incident command competency to develop on-call staff and increase emergency cover.

### Invest in safety, health and wellbeing initiatives

We aspire to the highest standards of health, safety, and wellbeing for our staff. This year we will strengthen this area by investing in new technology and equipment to keep people safe, in addition to increasing accessibility of our workplace wellbeing offer.

We will:

- Conclude and evaluate a trial of body worn cameras to enhance operational learning, improve firefighter safety, and provide increased transparency during incidents.
- Continue work to lessen the impacts of fire contaminants in line with our Health, Safety and Wellbeing Plan, providing new personal protective equipment on stations and fire engines.
- Develop a new delivery model for workplace wellbeing toolbox talks which includes a bitesize health, emotions and wellness offering in response to staff survey feedback.
- Continue to replace cardio equipment in station gyms, providing upgraded treadmills, rowers, and bikes to ensure a consistent standard of facilities.

### Encourage and listen to employee voice

We recognise the positive influence on both our employees' wellbeing and organisational success when there are opportunities for people to be involved, listened to, and invited to contribute their experience, expertise, and ideas. Ensuring our people feel informed, engaged, and valued is a lasting priority.

We will:

- Conduct a comprehensive staff survey to understand the topics and concerns that are important to our people and inform Service activity.
- Following a successful pilot, empower our firefighting tactics staff group to propose and test changes to firefighting guidance and practice.

### Service headquarters and leadership and development centre masterplan

Work started last year to create a masterplan for the redevelopment of Service headquarters and our leadership and development centre in Chorley, including new training props and modernised learning and office space. The redevelopment

represents vital investment in aging buildings that are uneconomical to maintain and will lead to efficiency, sustainability, and modernisation gains.

We will:

- Continue to build the masterplan focussing on feasibility and design development, ensuring training provision is aligned to the risks identified in our Strategic Assessment of Risk.

### Upgrade fire station facilities

Investment in fire stations is part of our commitment to ensuring our people have the best facilities to support their health and wellbeing by providing a safe and positive working environment.

We will:

- Complete the construction stage of improvements to the rest and welfare facilities at Blackpool Fire Station to better meet the needs of an increasingly diverse workforce.
- Make improvements to Preston Fire Station so it remains fit for purpose and better meets the needs of a diverse workforce, while plans to replace or relocate the station are explored as part of a review of emergency cover in the area.
- Update our Property Asset Management Plan following building condition and decarbonisation surveys to inform decisions about short-, medium-, and long-term investment in our property and estates assets.

### Preventing fires and other emergencies from happening

We constantly endeavour to prevent fires and other emergencies from happening. Prevention is always preferable to response and is by far the most effective way to make Lancashire safer. Our approach is to identify those who are most vulnerable in our communities, and design and target our prevention activities to reduce their risk.

#### Deliver targeted fire prevention activity

Evaluation of fire prevention activity is giving the Service greater understanding of which activities and interventions are most successful. Combined with local risk profiles, we are able to better target those most vulnerable and focus resources on reducing risk in our communities.

We will:

- Deliver a tailored home fire safety check service to residents living in wildfire risk areas to provide bespoke safety advice, prevent the ignition of fires and mitigate the effects if they do occur.
- Continue to embed evaluation of targeted prevention activities delivered in communities identified through local district planning.

#### Evaluate Year 2 education package

Firefighters and community fire safety staff aim to visit every Year 2 and Year 6 class in Lancashire every year, delivering lessons tailored for each age group about fire risks and what to do if a fire does happen or the alarm is raised.

We will:

- Evaluate and quality assure our Year 2 Childsafe package to ensure it remains aligned to emerging risk in local communities.

#### Expand fire safety community engagement

Supporting vulnerable people living in the community is at the core of our prevention services, which are targeted behaviourally, geographically, demographically, and thematically according to known risk factors. Understanding the diverse and changing needs of Lancashire's communities is essential to achieving this.

We will:

- Trial a new Lancashire-wide community engagement role which aims to deepen understanding of local risks among diverse communities, strengthen sustainable and trusted relationships, and identify additional ways to provide interventions.

### Protecting people and property when fires happen

Our fire protection services aim to reduce the number of fires that occur in commercial premises and the impact on life, property, and business disruption when fires do occur. We support businesses, employers, and landlords to meet their legal duties and keep people safe in their buildings with a county-wide inspection programme.

### Transform fire protection and business safety

Significant changes to fire safety and building control standards in recent years have changed the way fire and rescue services operate. We continue to invest in and develop our protection services, to ensure we remain well-placed to support those responsible for fire safety in their buildings.

We will:

- Introduce a new digital protection system to realise greater efficiency, effectiveness and productivity through mobile working, merging workflows and automating processes.

### Deliver tailored protection advice in diverse business communities

There are over 75,000 businesses in Lancashire and almost half of them are forecast to grow in the next year. Our regulatory activity focusses on premises where people are at greatest risk. Following changes to fire safety laws, we remain focussed on ensuring an inclusive approach to business support and adapting our regulatory activity to meet the needs of our communities.

We will:

- Engage with business owners to support them in meeting their legal duties and keeping people safe in their buildings.

### Implement operational learning in response to national events

The tragic incident at Grenfell Tower in 2017 was the catalyst for changes in fire safety legislation and across the construction industry. The findings of the public inquiry have resulted in a number of recommendations which both directly and indirectly impact on fire and rescue services.

We will:

- Work locally, regionally and nationally to implement the direct and indirect impacts of the Grenfell Tower Inquiry Phase 2 recommendations.

### Address mid-rise premises risk across the county

Since the completion of the national building risk review undertaken following the Grenfell Tower fire, we have actively worked throughout the county to address risk in low, medium and high-rise premises. We have worked closely with other regulators to address areas of non-compliance and speed up remediation plans to ensure the safety of residents and relevant persons.

We will:

- Work with local authorities to identify and triage all mid-rise premises (11-18 metres tall).
- Inspect all known mid-rise premises identified as having unknown or unsafe external wall systems.

### Support national activity to address unsafe cladding on buildings

In December 2024, the government published a Remediation Acceleration Plan to address residential buildings with unsafe cladding. The plan sets out the steps government will take, collaborating with partners including fire and rescue authorities, to increase the pace of building remediation, identify buildings at risk and better protect residents and leaseholders.

We will:

- Support government and other regulators to overcome the most significant barriers that have been identified as slowing the remediation process.

### Responding to fires and other emergencies quickly and competently

Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service strives to deliver the highest standards of operational response by continuously planning, preparing, and training for emergencies. Risks in communities are changing and the types of emergencies we attend are increasingly varied. We constantly review and adapt our approach to ensure we have the right appliances, equipment, skills, and technology to respond to any incident safely.

### Review emergency cover in Preston

A review of emergency cover across Preston and the surrounding area has started including exploring options to rebuild or relocate Preston Fire Station, which has been identified for redevelopment. The purpose of the review is to ensure fire engines are situated and staffed in ways that provide the best response to local risks and emergencies.

We will:

- Conclude a land review and exploration of options to replace or relocate Preston Fire Station.
- Determine the most effective and efficient disposition of resources in the area aligned with risk and demand.

### Optimise emergency cover through dynamic cover software

Dynamic cover software provides operators with visual data on community risks and emergency cover in real-time to inform decision-making on how best to deploy resources. This innovative software helps us to position firefighters and appliances dynamically and with greater precision to improve emergency cover and response times, particularly during periods of high demand.

We will:

- Monitor and review the implementation of dynamic cover software at North West Fire Control and within Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service to ensure the most effective and efficient deployment of resources across the county.

### Strengthen our response to climate change emergencies

Our climate change operational response plan aims to address the increasing threat of flooding and wildfires, lessen the impacts on communities and public services, and improve firefighter safety when dealing with these emergencies.

We will:

- Commission and introduce one large and one small fire appliance suitable for off-road travel to give improved access to rural areas in the event of flooding and wildfires.



### Strengthen firefighting and rescue capabilities

Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service has six search dogs trained in specialisms including victim recovery, fire investigation and high-risk missing person searches. The dogs can search small and dangerous spaces that crews are unable to reach, increasing the safety of responders at incidents.

We will:

- Train search dogs in the use of laser, drone, and commands via a radio system to prioritise search areas by providing intelligence to incident commanders.

Several new fire appliances are due to join our fleet this year to strengthen our response to fires in tall buildings and climate change emergencies, requiring a programme of training.

We will train firefighters to operate:

- Our highest ever aerial appliance, a 45-metre aerial ladder platform.
- Two additional water towers with increased reach of 20 metres.
- Two off-road fire appliances suitable for climate change emergencies.

### Adapt on-call response to increase emergency cover

Lancashire has 32 fire appliances crewed by on-call firefighters, who often have another job outside Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service. They live or work very close to the fire stations they operate from and respond to emergencies in their communities from home or work.

We will:

- Explore the feasibility of cluster stations, where on-call firefighters at stations in close proximity are available to respond to emergencies together, increasing fire cover over a wider area.
- Evaluate our online on-call planning tool used to identify optimum skill levels, prioritise training, monitor contractual performance, and inform recruitment needs.
- Expand our initiative to recruit on-call firefighters who, instead of working from home in their primary job, work from our stations and respond to emergencies during their working hours.

### Invest in our fleet and equipment

The Service conducts extensive research and development to ensure we continue to invest in appliances and equipment with advanced technology and capabilities, which will lead to a more effective response to emergencies and increased firefighter safety.

We will:

- Start the procurement of new breathing apparatus (BA) to provide the most effective, modern equipment that gives the highest level of firefighter safety.
- Evaluate the trial of a firefighting robot, an innovative multi-functional crawler vehicle which can be deployed in places that are too dangerous for firefighters.
- Scope and procure improved welfare provision at operational incidents, taking into account the views of our staff to inform requirements.
- Review our light vehicle fleet across the Service to identify areas for improvement, innovation, and efficiency.
- Support the replacement of the mobilising system at North West Fire Control to ensure it is fit for the future, serves the needs of Lancashire's communities, and provides value for money.
- Progress work to replace drill towers at nine stations as part of a service-wide replacement programme, investing over £2.5 million over the next five years.

### Delivering value for money in how we use our resources

We aim to use our resources efficiently to provide the best possible fire and rescue service for the people of Lancashire and to ensure the Service is affordable, now and in the future. A culture of continuous learning and innovation across all aspects of our organisation and services is central to achieving this.

#### Review how we use our resources

Financial challenges lie ahead to maintain our services and meet vital investment needs. We have a strong track record of balancing the budget and will continue to find ways to save money and make the best use of our resources.

- Review how we use our resources to ensure the Service remains affordable and represents value for money for the whole of Lancashire.

#### Maximise productivity and efficiency

Through continuous learning, review, and innovation we aim to increase efficiency and productivity across the Service, in line with national requirements. This enables the Service to invest savings and resources in frontline activity that delivers long-term improvements and value for money.

We will:

- Establish a productivity and efficiency forum in the Service to drive cross-organisational efficiency and sustainability improvements.
- Consider options for alternative fuelled vehicles, supporting our Environmental Sustainability Plan and carbon reduction aspirations.
- Embed the requirements of the Procurement Act 2023 in our processes, including the provision of information about public contract opportunities by publishing a forward-looking procurement pipeline.

#### Drive efficiencies through digitisation

Building on our digital first culture, we will continue to empower our people to access information and data easily on a range of systems and devices, invest in new technology, and drive efficiencies through digitisation.

We will:

- Continue to roll out new technology and mobile devices on our fire appliances to provide a mobile office environment, better connected incident grounds, and greater overall efficiencies.
- Following a trial, replace communication devices used to alert officers and on-call firefighters to emergencies with new pagers offering improved functionality and enhanced security.
- Replace radio equipment used by firefighters on the incident ground making use of advancements in digital technology to provide better communications.

- Engage with the Home Office-led project to replace our current incident recording system with a national fire data collection system.

### Improve performance management culture

Microsoft Power BI is being used in the Service to collate and interrogate performance data via a single platform, developed specifically to the user or department's needs through a dashboard. We plan to continue developing these dashboards to improve performance management culture.

We will:

- Continue the rollout of Power-BI dashboards to increase capacity for operational staff.
- Embed financial reporting in dashboards and a self-service tool across the organisation.
- Create local performance dashboards tailored to meet departmental requirements.

### Collaborate with other public services

Through our Blue Light Collaboration Board with Lancashire Constabulary and North West Ambulance Service, and by working jointly with other partners, we aim to collectively improve services to the public and provide maximum value for money.

We will:

- Expand the Community First Responder volunteer initiative to more people within the Service supporting North West Ambulance Service, particularly in rural areas where there is community need.