

Lancashire Combined Fire Authority

Meeting to be held on 28 April 2025

Fire Protection Report

Contact for further information: Deputy Chief Fire Officer Steve Healey
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Executive Summary

This report summarises Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service (LFRS) prosecutions pertaining to fire safety offences, in addition to convictions resulting from arson incidents which have been progressed via the criminal justice process.

Recommendation

The Authority is asked to note the report.

Fire Safety Convictions

Prosecution Case Progress

LFRS currently have two cases relating to the same premises within the court system. These relate to two responsible persons at a care and nursing home. One case has been moved to sentencing on the 7 May 2025 at the Magistrates Court. The second case had a dismissal hearing on the 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.

One further case is set for trial on the 14 July 2025 relating to student accommodation.

LFRS have 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.

Protection teams continue to investigate and build case files in relation to sixteen premises where offences are believed to have been committed under the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety Order) 2005, which include the following:

- Care and Nursing Home x 1
- House in Multiple Occupation x 3
- Residential Flats x 1
- Mixed commercial and Residential x 6
- Commercial but not residential (Used for sleeping) x 1
- Nightclub x 1
- Healthcare setting x 1
- Hotel x 1
- Supported Living x 1

Arson Risk Reduction

R v Craig Newman

Address - Alexandra Street, Preston

Date and Time of Call – 14/12/2023, 01:42

This incident involved a deliberate fire in a two storey mid-terrace house which caused severe damage to the staircase and moderate damage to the remainder of the property. The adjoining properties were occupied at the time of the incident.

The occupier of the property was charged with arson reckless as to whether life endangered and was sentenced to 32 months in prison.

R v Amanda O'Brian

Address – Imperial Street, Blackpool

Date and Time of Call – 28/05/2024, 01:57

This incident involved a deliberate fire in a two storey mid-terrace house. Evidence indicated the fire was caused by the ignition of combustible items located close to the front door inside the property. The fire caused severe damage to the entire property and contents. The adjoining properties were occupied at the time of the incident.

The defendant was sentenced to 30 months in prison.

R v Finlay Cunningham

Address – Hollin Bridge Street, Blackburn

Date and Time of Call – 25/05/2023, 02:21

This incident involved an ignited piece of material inside a 'baked bean sized' tin which was thrown in the direction of the rear of a domestic property. The fire was extinguished by the occupant before the arrival of the Fire Service. The material from the tin had burnt but there was no damage to the property because the items thrown did not come into contact with the building or hit the building and bounced off. The tin and material were seized by Lancashire Constabulary and subsequently sent for ignitable liquid residue analysis. The results indicated the tin and contents were contaminated with an ignitable liquid, most likely being white spirit.

The defendant was charged with arson and received 10 months imprisonment, suspended for 18 months.

There are another 14 live cases ongoing through the Criminal Justice System that we are continuing to progress.

Business risk

Moderate – Members are made aware of prosecutions related to fire safety activity and / or arson within Lancashire, to satisfy themselves that the required robust approach is being pursued.

Sustainability or Environmental Impact

None

Equality and Diversity Implications

None

Data Protection (GDPR)

Will the proposal(s) involve the processing of personal data?

No

HR implications

None

Financial implications

None

Legal implications

Failure of Responsible Persons to meet new legislative requirements placed upon them, may result in LFRS undertaking additional prosecution cases in future.

Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985**List of background papers**

Paper:

Date:

Contact:

Reason for inclusion in Part 2 if appropriate: Insert Exemption Clause