

# **Lancashire Combined Fire Authority**

Meeting to be held on 28 April 2025

## **Member Champion Activity Report**

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### **Executive Summary**

This paper provides a report on the work of the Member Champions for the period up to 27 February 2025.

### **Recommendation(s)**

The Authority is requested to note and endorse the report and acknowledge the work of the respective Champions.

### **Information**

The concept of Member Champions was introduced in December 2007 with a review of the roles in 2017.

The Authority appoints its Member Champions at its Annual Meeting in June, and the current Member Champions are:

- Community Safety –County Councillor John Singleton
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion – Councillor Zamir Khan MBE
- Health and Wellbeing – County Councillor Hasina Khan
- Road Safety – Councillor Fred Jackson

Reports relating to the activity of the Member Champions are provided on a regular basis to the Authority. During this period, all have undertaken their respective role in accordance with the defined terms of reference. Their activity to date is as follows:

### **Community Safety – County Councillor John Singleton**

The Southern Area Community Fire Safety (CFS) team has intensified efforts to work with partner agencies that engage with and support young males living with mental health conditions. Following two fire fatalities and one gaining entry fatality, work between the CFS Team and the Chorley and South Ribble and West Lancashire Community Safety Partnership (CSP), has highlighted the vulnerability of these individuals, and how best to target them.

While the CFS Team represented the Fire Service at the Chorley and South Ribble CSP meeting, Pubwatch extended an invite to their next Proprietors Network in April, where approximately 30 licensees will share best practice in order to support the safety and wellbeing of pub-goers and local communities. It is anticipated that as some lone males frequently attend these local pubs, the CFS Team could raise awareness via the Network by obtaining their assistance to help get important fire safety messages out to this vulnerable group.

Continuing with efforts to reach lone males, the CFA Team attended Bamber Bridge Men's Shed; a community space where men can enjoy practical hobbies, make friends, and learn and share skills. During the visit, the Team delivered a quiz and held a forum specifically designed to engage the group's interest in fire safety. The visit was very well received and lots of discussion was prompted; a brilliant social media post was also sent out following the visit to advertise the excellent work which had been done.

To engage further with lone males, the CFA Team have also been working with 'Andy's Man Club' and 'Strongmen'; a charity that supports men following bereavement. They have also been working closely with veteran groups across the Southern Area with the overarching aim to increase referrals and reduce the number of incidents.

On Wednesday, 19 March 2025, the CFS Team attended the National Social Prescribing Day at Chorley Town Hall. Approximately six years ago, social prescribing – which is a key component in NHS England's Universal Personalised Care Plan – was introduced to Chorley. The aim of the approach is to enable pathways to connect people to activities, groups and services in their community, in order to meet practical, social and emotional needs that effect their health and wellbeing, such as loneliness, debt, or stress due to financial pressures or poor housing.

This year, the annual event was held to celebrate the people, organisations and communities that make social prescribing happen. The event was well attended by both public and partners, and on the day the Team raised awareness of Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service (LFRS) services and activities, and generated five Home Fire Safety Check (HFSC) referrals. It was also an ideal opportunity to provide those who attended with safe cooking advice, as it fell within the cooking campaign period. Since social prescribing started in Chorley, the CFS Team have developed strong ties with the link workers, who make very high-quality referrals and provide mutual support during joint 'Safe and Well' visits.



To note, CFS teams in general have received an increased number of referrals for patients on end-of-life care. These referrals are often received due to an increase in the amount of hospital equipment they have at home including, in some cases, the introduction of oxygen. Teams have reported feeling uncomfortable at times or have

struggled to know how to communicate best with family members and loved ones of someone receiving this form of care. So, training has been secured in order to assist learning and understanding of how to have difficult conversations under stressful and upsetting circumstances.

Also, within this last reporting period, the CFS Team attended St Catherine's Hospice to complete their 'Last Days Matter' training delivered by hospice volunteers. The training was completed alongside care agency staff and nursing professionals and touched on the many aspects of end-of-life care, and how those caring for someone can be supported.

In addition, over the course of the training, the Team were made aware of the bereavement café led by volunteers. This information was especially important as statistically, after the loss of a loved one, some people can be left feeling isolated and alone, which can increase vulnerability of fire risk. Therefore, as part of a broader strategy, conversations are taking place for the CFS Team to visit more regularly and raise awareness to those who might otherwise have limited access to targeted fire safety information, such as knowledge of our HFSC.

To conclude, at Olive High School in Burnley, the CFS Team were invited by health partners to deliver a presentation to parents and guardians on fire safety, in particular; smoke alarm maintenance, cooking safely, how to escape plan and contacting emergency services.

### **Equality, Diversity and Inclusion – Councillor Zamir Khan MBE**

Over the last quarter, representatives from the Service have been actively engaging with employees and communities in various ways.

To reduce accidental home fires, we continue to target at risk groups, including those affected by age, disability, and lifestyle. Recently, the Southern Area CFS team attended the Edge Hill University Freshers Fayre, focussing on the risks to young people, promoting awareness about drink driving, and providing fire safety advice tailored to students. A crashed car display reinforced the message.

The Service also remains focussed on reducing the frequency and severity of Road Traffic Collisions (RTC), especially among young people. This quarter, the Service participated in a media interview with That's Lancashire TV to highlight its role in educating road users. Two Wasted Lives sessions were delivered at Springfields and West Lancs College to provide real life insights into RTC consequences. A multi-agency event at Burnley College featured a demonstration of an RTC and focused on the 'Fatal 5' causes of fatal collisions.

The 2024 Bright Sparx campaign ran from 01 October to 18 November, targeting the Bonfire Night period. Demographic data from district profiles was used to strategically target the most vulnerable members of the community.

The Service is enhancing accessibility across the Service. Co-Pilot software and dyslexia support tools are being trialled, and Articulate software has been purchased to make e-learning more accessible. The Service is working towards a bronze level accreditation as a Dyslexia Friendly Workplace with the British Dyslexia Association.

Additionally, Human Resources has created an 'Everything You Need to Know' document to support candidates through the recruitment process.

Following input from the Race and Religion Employee Voice Group, a new translation app has been rolled out, replacing the previous limited version. This will increase the number of languages available. A name badge trial has been introduced to highlight staff language skills to members of the public, further strengthening engagement and communication with the public.

A positive action recruitment event was delivered at the Learning and Development Centre on 8 March 2025, International Women's Day, promoting employment opportunities with LFRS.

Promoting health and wellbeing, a wellbeing update session was delivered to all Flexi-Duty Officers (FDOs) as part of the Flexi Friday programme, with each officer receiving a 'red bag' containing key wellbeing resources.

This quarter, the Service raised awareness for Stammering Awareness Day and Crohn's and Colitis Awareness Week, sharing information via the Engine House.

The Service continues to invest in facilities; the welfare facility upgrades at Blackpool are due for completion in July 2025 and minor works at Preston Fire Station are underway.

In identifying ways to improve our organisational culture, a gap analysis was conducted to compare our position against the recommendations from South Wales and Dorset and Wiltshire culture reports. Any learning from culture reports feeds into our Departmental and Training and Organisational Development Plans.

### **Health, Wellbeing and Climate Change – County Councillor Hasina Khan**

We continue to promote awareness around food waste, encouraging staff to make sure all food is removed to the new food waste bin before washing up or putting in the dishwasher.

The Separation of Waste (England) Regulations 2024 provides details of the six recyclable waste streams which are plastic, paper and card, glass, metal, food waste and garden waste. From the 31 March 2025, organisations with 10 or more full-time employees must separate food waste and dry recyclables for collection. This is to avoid as much food waste as possible ending up in landfill.

Service Headquarters (SHQ), Leadership and Development Centre (LDC) and all wholetime stations will have to collect food waste separately in specific caddies, which will be provided via the Safety, Health and Environment (SHE) Department's waste contract management process. Food waste collections will be arranged to start in time for the 31 March 2025 and posters will be updated sharing further details for this.

Food waste on LFRS sites is not additional to our usual waste and, although concerns have been expressed by stations, that food waste will be left in internal bins overnight or in external bins for up to a week between collections, this is no different to the waste management process now. The only difference is that food waste is currently not separated from other waste. Whilst this legislation does mean an increase in the number of bins, it does not mean an increase in waste. Going forward, this waste will also contribute to our recycling percentage as it will no longer be disposed of as general waste and will therefore help achieve, SHE Objectives and Actions.

The last quarter has been spent focusing on the 'health' element of Health and Wellbeing; exploring the link between physical health and mental health.

In December/January we rolled out new functional fitness kit (dumbbells, adjustable benches, resistance bands) to LFRS owned gyms. We also completed the first phase of a cardio fitness equipment replacement programme, for those pieces of fitness equipment that are over 10years old or no longer financially viable to repair. 'Circuit cards' will shortly be introduced to all stations, to supplement the installation of functional fitness kit, to provide staff with guidance of how to use the kit and encourage staff to maintain good levels of functional fitness.

One of our Service Personal Training Instructors (PTIs) is also a Yoga Instructor, so we were fortunate to be able to host a yoga session in February, which was streamed over Teams so colleagues across the Service could join in wherever they were. The session was also recorded, to enable those who were not able to join at the time to access it at a time convenient to them.

We have facilitated two Fire Fighters Charity accompanied wellness workshops, linking both mental and physical health together. These workshops were Promoting Relaxation and Managing Stress, providing an opportunity for staff to gain an understanding of how relaxation techniques can help reduce or manage stress, and the impact that can have on their physical health as well as their mental health. Over the next 12 months we will continue to facilitate similar workshops to promote personal resilience and provide support to staff, across the whole of the Service.

### **Road Safety – Councillor Fred Jackson**

Between September to December 2024, five young people tragically lost their lives on Lancashire's roads. This prompted a significant focus on road safety in our 16 to 25 age groups, mainly in colleges.

The first event took place on the dangers of reckless driving at Burnley Fire Station. This involved Green Watch Firefighter Gervaise and Firefighter Buck who spent a morning in January delivering the Wasted Lives initiative to a group of forensic science students in a classroom-based setting. The session was well received, with all students fully engaged. As well as contributing to the knowledge they required for their course, they also learnt valuable life-skills from the perspective of better road safety understanding.



The second, larger event took place at Lancaster and Morecambe College. This was a multi-agency event organised via the Fire Service, consisting of a number of road safety organisations in a 'marketplace' setting.

At the event, the Community Fire Safety team utilised the crashed car display to create an impactful visual for students to observe. Lancashire County Council provided virtual reality headsets for students to listen to important safety messages about the dangers of drink and drug driving.

Westgate Tyres also kindly supported the event and provided tyre safety advice. The day was rounded off with students receiving important fire safety information via fire crew members from Lancaster and Morecambe.

On the day, feedback from staff and students was very favourable. More than 400 students attended, and Safeguarding Lead, Beverley Martingale, said of the event, "It just gets better every year".





The largest event to run was at Myerscough College, where more than 600 students had timetables rescheduled in order to observe and take part in a 90-minute Road Safety Roadshow.

The event started off in the drama theatre with a 30 minute Wasted Lives presentation. Students were then chaperoned to the marketplace area, where they watched a coordinated Road Traffic Collision (RTC) demonstration via the On-Call crew from Garstang Fire Station. Afterwards, they were able to see the aftermath and causes through the impactful nature of the crashed car display. A number of partner agencies were also in attendance, delivering important safety messages and raising awareness of services. In particular, the event was supported by the LFRS Community Fire Safety Team, Lancashire County Council, Lancashire Constabulary and North West Ambulance Service.

The event was another huge success for this reporting period, and we intend to roll out the model in 2025/26. Feedback from Emily Curtis, Student Services, was: "It was a fantastic day, it gave the students a fantastic, informative and educational experience".



## **Business risk**

Whilst no formal obligation is placed on the Authority to have Champions, effective utilisation of such roles offers a number of benefits.

## **Sustainability or Environmental Impact**

The Member Champion role provides leadership on environmental issues and assists in engaging Authority members in strategic objectives relating to protecting the environment.

**Equality and Diversity Implications**

The Member Champion role provides leadership on equality and diversity issues and assists in engaging Authority members in strategic objectives relating to equality and diversity.

**Data Protection (GDPR)**

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

If the answer is yes, please contact a member of the Democratic Services Team to assist with the appropriate exemption clause for confidential consideration under part 2 of the agenda.

**HR implications**

Some Member and Officer time commitments.

**Financial implications**

Activities are within budget.

**Legal implications**

None identified.

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

Paper:

Date:

Contact: ACFO Samantha Pink

Reason for inclusion in Part 2 if appropriate: N/A