

Lancashire Combined Fire Authority

Meeting to be held on 23 June 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

Prosecutions

On 1 December 2020, Fire Safety Officers inspected the Morvern Care Centre, Thornton-Cleveleys. The fire safety breaches posed a serious threat to the life and safety of all residents and staff, resulting in the issue of a Prohibition Notice.

At the time of the inspection, the home was occupied by forty-five elderly and vulnerable residents, as well as the staff. Over the following two weeks, a co-ordinated multi-agency approach was followed to relocate the residents into other available care facilities.

On the 15 October 2024 Fylde Fire Systems Limited pleaded guilty to three offences under the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 (FSO), those being:

- Failure to ensure the premises were equipped with appropriate fire detectors and alarms. Article 13(1)(a) FSO.
- Failure to safeguard the safety of relevant persons by ensuring that any facilities, equipment and devices provided in respect of the premises were subject to a suitable system of maintenance and were maintained in an efficient state and in an efficient working order. Article 17(1) FSO.
- Failure to co-operate with other responsible persons, so far as was necessary to enable compliance with the requirements placed upon them. Article 22(1)(a) FSO.

On Wednesday 7 May 2025, sentencing took place at Blackburn Magistrates Court, where Fylde Fire Systems Limited were sentenced and received the following sanctions:

- A fine of £30,000, and a £2,000 victim surcharge.
- Ordered to pay £18,725 in costs to Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service.

The sentencing outcome has been appealed by Fylde Fire Systems Ltd.

Four other cases currently sit within the court system.

A further defendant in the Morvern Care Centre prosecution is due for pre-trial hearing on the 6 of June 2025 at Preston Crown Court. A trial date has been set for the 28 July 2025.

On the 19 May 2025 two responsible persons of a residential block of flats in Preston pleaded guilty to breaches of the FSO. Sentencing is set for the 26 June 2025 at Preston Crown Court.

On the 22 May the responsible person of a commercial car parts/garage premises in Blackburn pleaded guilty to breaches of the FSO. Sentencing is set for the 26 June 2025 at Preston Crown Court.

The responsible person for two Houses in Multiple Occupation in Bacup and Darwen has been summoned to appear at Preston Magistrates Court on the 18 June 2025.

Prosecution case progress

Protection teams continue to investigate and build case files in relation to 16 other 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
- Health care setting x 1
- Hotel x 1
- Supported Living x 1

Arson Risk Reduction

R v Alan FURGUSON

Address - Harcourt Road, Blackpool

Date and Time of Call – 14/03/2025 12:11

This incident involved a deliberate fire in the kitchen of a two storey mid-terrace house which caused severe damage by fire to DIY equipment placed on top of a gas hob and moderate damage by smoke to the kitchen.

The occupier admitted starting the fire deliberately and the Police issued a simple caution.

R v Robert KAVANAGH

Address – Woodfield Road, Blackpool

Date and Time of Call – 05/01/2024 17:34

This incident involved a deliberate fire in a second floor room of a 3-storey hotel. Evidence indicated that there were two seats of fire, one within the room and one on a flat roof directly underneath the room window. The fire caused severe damage to bedding and a small area of carpet by fire and slight damage by smoke to the room and corridor.

The defendant was sentenced to 2 years and 2 months in prison.

There are a further 18 live cases ongoing through the Criminal Justice System that the service is 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