

Lancashire Combined Fire Authority

Member Training & Development Working Group

Notes of hybrid meeting held on Thursday, 24 April 2025.

Present:	
Councillors	
D Smith (Chair)	
S Morris (Vice-Chair)	
A Kay	
Z Khan MBE	
D O'Toole	
M Pattison	

Officers
E Sandiford, Head of Human Resources (LFRS) S Hunter, Member Services Manager (LFRS) L Barr, Member Services Officer (LFRS)

Apologies for Absence

There were none.

Notes of Previous Meeting

The notes of the previous meeting held on 07 November 2024 were confirmed as a correct record.

The Chair asked that thanks and gratitude be given to all those Members retiring and those that would not return for their Service to the Authority.

Special thanks were given to County Councillor O'Toole for 25 years of Service to the Combined Fire Authority.

Member Training & Development - Update Report

The Director of People and Development (DoPD), Liz Sandiford, presented the report which detailed the various means available for Elected Members of the Combined Fire Authority to access training and development opportunities.

Personal Development Plans

Personal Development Plans were being held face to face, although they could be held over the telephone and electronically to support Members with busy diaries.

One returning Councillor had recently joined the CFA since the November 2024 meeting. Of the 25 elected Members of the Authority, 88% had met with a Democratic Services Officer to draw up or review their Personal Development Plan.

Training Opportunities and e-Learning

Members were encouraged through the Member Information Bulletin and emails, to view the North West Employers Organisation and the Local Government websites to access training opportunities. Democratic Services also emailed Members with details of training courses.

Members' Handbook

The handbook for the municipal year 2024/25 had been issued to all Members via the Member Information Bulletin.

Member Information Bulletin

The Member Information Bulletin had been reformatted to web-based and was accessed via an electronic link with tabs for information. Although the bulletin was continuously in development, the first digital bulletin had been emailed to Members on 01 April 2022 and was emailed on a monthly basis.

In addition to providing meeting dates, Member Training and Development opportunities, news and events, it was intended that the Bulletin would also provide upcoming safety campaign information for Members to forward, as appropriate, to their constituents and key partners using their social media channels together with reporting to Members on the success of these campaigns in subsequent issues.

Co-Ordination of Training

Democratic Services arranged visits to outside bodies and organised demonstrations of Service equipment and facilities which helped Members to broaden their organisational knowledge and understanding of the work of Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service. Additionally, training such as the code of conduct and culture was provided after Committee meetings which helped Members with their roles.

Democratic Services continued to contact home authorities where relevant to co-ordinate Member Training and development opportunities and avoid duplication.

The DoPD provided Members with an update on the implementation of the new mileage claim system. She advised that a simplified paper-based system for claiming mileage was in the process of development and certain aspects of the procedure for the reporting of information needed to be considered. Once the process had been finalised by the Director of Corporate Services, Members would be informed. County Councillor O'Toole added that the need for an access code for admission to the system was an added complication to an already complex process. Councillor Z Khan echoed the concerns. The Chair requested that the simplified system be implemented in time for the commencement of new Members' terms.

The Chair and County Councillor O'Toole commented that the training opportunities

provided by the Service were excellent.

County Councillor Pattison stated that the King's Trust presentations were very moving and an excellent opportunity to witness the work and development of young people and staff. She encouraged all Members to attend.

County Councillor O'Toole stated that the Member Handbook was a very important resource and useful for Committee dates, Committee Membership and contact details. It would be very beneficial for new Members.

Resolved: - That Members noted and endorsed the content of the report.

Review of Member Training Needs Analysis

The Member Training and Development Working Group was responsible for analysing and agreeing the training needs of Members that linked to the objectives, priorities, and vision of the Authority.

Members were updated on the action that had been taken in response to training needs identified from the last Training Needs Analysis taken in November 2023 and the Personal Development Sessions that had been held with Members throughout 2024/25.

Following consideration, Members agreed that their training needs were being met and agreed the training needs for 2025/26 as follows:

- To continue to promote Fire Safety / Safe and Well Service and the work of the Member Champions;
- To continue to attend Service area inductions / meetings at stations and information sessions on key issues to support decision-making;
- To maintain good attendance at all Strategy Group meetings, encouraging all Members to attend;
- To continue with the informal buddy system;
- To support the use of electronic systems where needed, preferred / available.
- To attend a King's Trust presentation or Cadet Passing Out Parade;
- To continue to promote / attend all available training;
- To offer new Members LGA Fire Leadership Essentials training;
- To support Member knowledge around the Service, terminology, and operational / staff roles;
- To attend and participate in Culture and EDI training following a Committee meeting;
- To attend and participate in Cyber Security training following a Committee meeting.

It was noted by Members that County Councillor Singleton had replaced County Councillor Salter as the Member Champion for Community Safety with the report for Member Champion activity being presented at the upcoming CFA meeting.

Members were informed that they would be added to eLMS (e-Learning Management System), which was an online facility used by staff to complete learning modules. This would allow members to complete training tailored to their needs at in their own time.

The Chair advised that some training, such as Cyber Security, may be completed by Members at their home authorities. It was agreed that Democratic Services would contact home authorities to confirm completed training to avoid duplication.

The Chair and County Councillor O'Toole emphasised the importance of Strategy Group meetings as it was an opportunity for Members and Officers to discuss key issues and changes within, or affecting, the Service. The DoPD stated that Strategy meetings provided a chance for the Service to gather feedback from Members which influenced decisions and future planning.

In relation to the item of New Members on page 14 of the agenda pack, the Chair highlighted that it was useful for new Members to meet with the Chief Fire Officer and part of their introduction to LFRS as it was a good opportunity to gain insight into the work of the Service and current topics of importance.

Members agreed to the suggested training in the report.

Resolved: - That the Committee agreed the training development needs for 2025/26.

Monitoring, Review & Evaluation of Activities

The report provided an update on Member Training and Development activities since the previous meeting. The report showed opportunities and outcomes of activities undertaken by Members to support the achievement of Service objectives or positive outcomes for communities.

Involvement at Area Level

Members were routinely invited to attend local events such as Open Days, Charity Car Washes, and 'Safe Drive and Stay Alive' events. Members were encouraged to contact area personnel to arrange to visit their local fire station to discuss local key issues.

Meet and greet sessions had taken place at Blackpool & Fleetwood Fire Stations.

Through the Member Information Bulletin, Members had been invited to and had attended King's Trust Presentation and events in their local communities.

Members had attended the following King's Trust presentations:

- Blackpool Team 90 – 19.11.2024
- Fleetwood Team 58 - 26.11.2024
- Pendle Team 76 – 01.04.2025
- Morecambe Team 67 – 02.04.2025
- Blackpool Team 91 – 08.04.2025
- Fleetwood Team 59 – 09.04.2025
- Burnley Team 73 – 10.04.2025

Events and Visits

- **LGA Annual Fire Conference 11 – 12 March 2025**

Four Members had attended the LGA Annual Fire Conference in March 2025 which had been held in Gateshead. Conference activity included nine plenaries consisting of presentations and workshops comprised of various topics.

- **LGA Fire and Rescue Leadership Essentials**

Six Members (3 new Members) had been scheduled to attend the LGA Fire and Rescue Leadership Essentials Programme which was being held in October 2024 and February 2025 (with a maximum of 3 Members per authority on each programme). However, only two Members attended in October and no Members attended in February.

- **LGA Leadership Essentials – Audit Committee**

One Member of the Audit Committee had attended the LGA Leadership Essentials – Audit Committees training in January 2025.

- **North West Fire Control Visit**

A visit to North West Fire Control had taken place on 23 January 2025 and four Members had attended. The visits included a discussion and a tour of the Control Room. The feedback from Members was very positive and they had found the visit interesting and informative.

- **Service Dogs Demonstration**

In December 2024, Members attended a demonstration of Service dogs working in conjunction with drones and lasers. LFRS was the only Fire Service in the world working collaboratively with dogs, drones and lasers.

- **Carol Service**

On 11 December 2024, Members had been invited to attend the annual Carol Service at Blackburn Cathedral which included a reading from the Vice-Chair.

- **Burnley College Road Safety Week Event**

Members had been invited by Area Manager, Matt Hamer, to attend a Road Safety event which was held at Burnley College on Thursday 21 November. The day covered Lancashire's Fatal 5 and involved the College's preforming arts students who acted out a scenario of a group of young drunk drivers and saw operational crews from Burnley extracting the occupants from a crash. Following the demo, a 'Market Place,' opened with the Wasted Lives Crashed Car and our colleagues from LCC. There were some virtual reality headsets available and drink drive / 1 unit – 1-hour props and information which would be utilised to press the safety messaging. The crew at Burnley were also on hand to showcase our equipment and engage with students.

- **Road Safety Event - Burnley**

On 13 December 2024, Members attended an event aimed at raising awareness of the dangers of speeding and reckless driving which took place outside Jamia Mosque.

- **Celebrating our People**

The Chair, Vice-Chair, and Spokesperson for the Opposition were invited to attend the annual staff celebration event on 21 November 2024. As part of the Service's staff recognition activity, more than 70 people were honoured with Long Service Good Conduct Awards, Star Awards, Chief Fire Officer's Commendations, Bravery Awards and Academic Achievements.

Member Information Bulletin

Members' views were requested to comment on what they felt worked well with the Member Information Bulletin and how engagement could be improved.

IT and Mileage Claim Sessions

Ongoing support on a 1-2-1 basis was provided by Democratic Services Officers to access the internet, assist Members to submit mileage claims, and access the Mod.Gov app to view private papers.

Social Media

The Service used a number of social media platforms which Members were encouraged to join to share protection and prevention information and promote the work of the Service. The Service had social media accounts on Facebook, X/Twitter, Instagram, YouTube, TikTok, Nextdoor, and LinkedIn, as well as a Podcast (Out of the Ashes).

Suggested Training

Training on the following was recommended for Members following the September CFA meeting:

- Cyber Security
- Community Leadership
- Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion
- Reputational Risk

County Councillor O'Toole commented that he had not attended any King's Trust presentations as there were none held in West Lancashire. He stated that Skelmersdale College ran the programme in that area, but he did not believe that it was effectively managed. The DoPD advised that she would look into the King's Trust programme in that area and report back to Members.

County Councillor Kay asked whether the Service would carry out road safety events in relation to electric vehicles (EV)/scooters/bikes. The DoPD explained that there was a prevention programme at schools which had been expanded to cover e-bikes, but she would check further with the Prevention Team. She would also liaise with the CFO to see if the Service's response to EV incidents could be added to the Incidents of Note report which was presented to the CFA.

County Councillor O'Toole stated that EV batteries were unsafe which led to EV incidents. Additionally, the Chair advised that Members had been advised of a Lithium-Ion Battery Safety Bill which was going through parliament. The DoPD informed Members that she

would investigate and provide an update.

The Chair highlighted a typing error in the first paragraph on page 19 of the agenda pack which Democratic Services assured would be amended.

The Chair commented that he always read the Member Information Bulletin as it was a good tool with lots of useful information.

Members discussed the Service dogs and their work in overseas disasters.

County Councillor Morris asked and the DoPD confirmed that the Cyber Security training was new. The Service's ICT and digital departments had merged to become the Digital Data and Technology (DDAT) department and the Head of DDAT would provide a Cybersecurity session following the September CFA meeting. Members noted that the Service had been the target of cybersecurity and the DoPD would ask that the future session would include the threats faced by the Service.

County Councillor O'Toole informed Members that County Councillor Ron Woollam's wife had died after a short illness, and he would not stand in the next election. The Chair gave thanks for his Service and asked that the Authority's best wishes were given to Ron.

County Councillor O'Toole advised that County Councillors Terry Hurn and Paul Rigby has suffered from ill health and would not be standing in the elections. The Chair gave thanks for their Service.

The Chair thanked the DoPD and Democratic services for their work.

Resolved:- That the Group noted and endorsed the content of the report as presented.

Future Meeting Dates

The next meeting of the Working Group will be held on Thursday **23 October 2025**. A further meeting was agreed for Thursday **23 April 2026**.

LFRS HQ
Fulwood

Liz Sandiford
Director of People and Development