

People Strategy 2025 – 2027

1. Purpose

The People Strategy sets out the strategic direction for our people over the next three years. It sets out the areas of priority that we are required to deliver to ensure that we achieve our Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP) 2022 -2027, and we develop a Service that is capable of continuous improvement, and which responds positively to change.

The People Strategy seeks to recruit and deliver a workforce which is resilient, highly skilled, flexible, diverse and which can deliver the Service's aim of keeping the people of Lancashire safer and the actions within it support the Service in achieving the Leading the Service and the Leading and Developing People Fire Standards.

2. Where are we now

The Service recognises that it is operating at a time of change, sweeping changes to building fire safety standards, the increasing impacts of climate change emergencies, and opportunities and risks posed by new technology, have altered the ways fire and rescue services keep people safe. The Manchester Arena and Grenfell Phase 2 will drive legislative and operating policy change and the changes to the governance arrangements in Lancashire have the potential to result in the establishment of a mayor.

We have an ambitious capital investment programme, and there is likely to be pressure on public funds, we recognise the need to manage any change in a proactive and transparent way, engaging members of staff, working collaboratively, realising efficiencies, and ensuring we deliver the best value for money whilst maintaining quality service provision to our communities.

Our workforce is becoming more diverse, we recognise that we still have more to do, and we will continue to use positive action to support the delivery of our approach to recruitment to On Call and Wholetime firefighter roles and create flexible recruitment pathways into the On Call and specialist departments to fulfil any projected labour gaps in our Workforce Plan.

We recognise the specific challenges facing Protection as identified in the National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) Remediation White Paper in terms of the attraction, development of competence and retention of fire safety inspectors and we will be exploring opportunities for working with the University of Central Lancashire (UCLAN) in terms of their fire engineering and fire and leadership graduates.

We recognise that recruiting and retaining support staff has become more competitive, and we will promote Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service (LFRS) as an employer of choice, in terms of our brand, the availability of hybrid and flexible working arrangements and, where appropriate, apply market supplements. We

continue to identify opportunities to recruit and develop skilled members of staff who can innovate through apprenticeship opportunities and the use of career grades.

We also understand that our leaders need to be able to operate as a broader public sector partner, capable of identifying future talent, engaging, and supporting their members of staff to reach their full potential, whilst also challenging poor behaviour and consistently role modelling the Service values and the Code of Ethics.

To respond positively at a time of change, we have worked hard to embed our Service 'STRIVE' values, and the Code of Ethics, actively engaging with our employees, employee voice groups, undertaking proactive consultation with representative bodies, and engaging with our staff, to ensure that they are fully informed, and that their feedback is incorporated into the development of our plans.

3. Our proudest achievements

As a result of our 2021 – 2024 People Strategy, we have:

- Delivered face to face briefings/eLearning on the Code of Ethics, refreshed our corporate induction and our EDI eLearning.
- Enhanced our approach to coaching and mentoring by launching our internal 'Lift and Climb' mentoring scheme which 32 staff have accessed, in addition to our external coaching options.
- Ensured all those in an operational leadership role have attended training on "How to have a difficult conversation".
- Delivered 360 feedback to all those in a leadership role, with the availability of coaching to support their development.
- Delivered leadership development events on challenging behaviour, managing change and building personal resilience and other development events collaboratively with Blue Light Partners.
- Delivered 'Reflect and Rebuild' sessions utilising learning from Safecall, our new anonymous reporting line.
- Updated our intranet, 'Engine House', promoting development opportunities to grey and green book members of staff and creating awareness about our leadership development pathways.
- Refreshed our leadership development programmes utilising the NFCC CMI licences and the apprenticeship levy.
- Delivered communication to members of staff on a range of equality, diversity and inclusion initiatives, promoting the value of diversity and educating people on positive action as detailed in our refreshed Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy.
- Delivered Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) training and improved the quality assurance of our EIA's.
- Utilised our Employee Voice Groups (EVG) to inform policies and decision-making, and increased the breadth of the EVG's, by adding two new groups for Disability and Neurodiversity.

- Utilised On-Call Availability, Recruitment and Skill software (OARS) to prioritise training, increased the number of Incident Command courses, and increased the number of ways to attract people to On-Call, increasing flexibility and improving appliance availability.
- Delivered positive action, harnessing community engagement with minority groups to attract a diversity of talent.
- Developed our online appraisal system enabling us to more effectively identify talent, the potential for leavers, improving workforce planning, succession planning and the planning of training.
- Delivered a new learning management system, improving and increasing the ways in which people can record their development and access reasonable adjustments.
- Developed a case management system to give oversight of issues affecting our workforce.
- Introduced a new approach to monitoring sickness absence which has improved rates of attendance in the workplace.
- Established a professional standards function by expanding the role of the Service Solicitor.
- Completed the HMI recommendations in the Culture and Values Report and the Misconduct Report.
- Completed self-assessments against the Leading the Service Fire Standard and the Leading and Developing People Fire Standard.
- Established a Team Brief, met regularly with representative bodies and members of staff through station visits and engagement sessions.
- Actively promoted health and wellbeing, personal resilience and workplace wellbeing.
- Promoted fitness, health and nutrition to Grey and Green Book members of staff.

4. The Service values and ethics

Our current operating environment requires an organisational culture, mind-set and behaviours that reflect our aims and a workforce capable of responding to the challenges ahead. The way we work to achieve our priorities is as important as what we do, and our Service values reflect the behaviours we expect of our staff.

Our values

- Service: Making Lancashire safer is the most important thing we do.
- Trust: We trust the people we work with.
- Respect: We respect each other.
- Integrity: We do what we say we will do.
- Valued: We actively listen to others.
- Empowered: We contribute to decisions and improvements.

5. Code of Ethics

Our Service values are supported by the new national Core Code of Ethics for Fire and Rescue Services in England. The Core Code sets out five ethical principles,

which provide a basis for promoting good behaviour and challenging inappropriate behaviour.

- Putting our communities first - we put the interest of the public, the community and service users first.
- Integrity - we act with integrity including being open, honest, and consistent in everything we do.
- Dignity and respect - making decisions objectively based on evidence, without discrimination or bias.
- Leadership - we are all positive role models, always demonstrating flexibility and resilient leadership. We are all accountable for everything we do and challenge all behaviour that falls short of the highest standards.
- Equality, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) - we continually recognise and promote the value of EDI both within LFRS and the wider communities in which we serve. We stand against all forms of discrimination, create equal opportunities, promote equality, foster good relations, and celebrate difference.

We require all our employees and everyone in Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service to behave in accordance with the Service values and to follow the Core Code, including those working with or on behalf of other fire and rescue services.

6. Where do we want to be

- An organisation which is seen as an employer of choice and the Service is recognised as a place where staff are developed and supported to achieve their full potential.
- An organisation which is inclusive, has a shared understanding across the Service in relation to the value of diversity, and the behaviours, skills and attributes required for a modern firefighter.
- A workforce which is diverse, fit and capable of readily identifying risk and proactively meets the needs of the communities of Lancashire.
- A firefighter workforce which delivers its emergency response requirements in terms of being highly skilled, capable of responding to different types of emergencies safely and able to deliver during times of business continuity challenges.
- Members of staff who consistently demonstrate the behaviours in the Code of Ethics, the behaviours which underpin STRIVE and who feel confident to challenge others.
- A high-quality training provider for firefighter apprenticeships.
- Leaders who demonstrate the behaviours within the LFRS values, the Leadership Framework, and the Code of Ethics and who understand coaching, and who use this as a preferred leadership style, who are comfortable in challenging poor performance and who can give feedback in a developmental way.
- Leaders who can recognise talent, who provide stretch and challenge, fostering a growth mindset, who support their teams to fulfil their potential and who facilitate change successfully.

- Leaders who communicate our aim and priorities so that everyone understands their role in achieving them and who listen so that their teams can voice ideas, express views and help make improvements.
- A Service which uses business, workforce and performance information to shape its direction of travel, and which operates collaboratively, and which meets regulatory requirements.
- An organisation which delivers change successfully, engaging and listening to members of staff and key stakeholders.

7. LFRS Strategic People priorities: -

We will continue to use learning from the NFCC, HMI recommendations and the Fire Standards to inform the development of our future priorities:

- We will continue to embed Service values, behaviours, and the Code of Ethics making LFRS a place where everyone feels valued and included.
- We will continue to promote LFRS as an employer of choice and we will recruit a workforce which is diverse, meets the needs of the people of Lancashire and any employment needs identified in our workforce plan.
- We will continue to develop the capability and resilience of leaders who can energise their teams, who encourage flexibility, innovation and who promote continuous improvement.
- We will continue to embed talent management and succession planning, shaping the workforce to meet Service needs and support individuals to achieve their full potential.
- We will continue to promote a resilient and healthy workforce.
- We will continue to actively engage with our workforce responding to feedback and involving staff in the shaping of our plans and decision making.

Delivery of the People Strategy is achieved through the following delivery plans:

- Training and Organisational Development Plan.
- Equality Diversity Inclusion and Culture Action Plan.
- Workforce Plan.
- Health, Safety and Wellbeing Plan.
- Internal Communications Strategy.

7.1 Continue to embed the Service values, behaviours, and the Code of Ethics making LFRS a place where everyone feels valued and included.

- Continue to educate members of staff on the value of diversity, in terms of meeting the needs of the people of Lancashire and the difference between positive action and positive discrimination.
- Ensure all those in an operational leadership role have attended “How to have a difficult conversation”, have attended recent training in performance management, and the ACAS Conducting Investigations course, as part of their development programme.

- Ensure all those involved in recruitment and selection have received training to ensure that there is a shared understanding of the required skills and attributes for those seeking to join the Service.
- Continue to embed and develop expertise in undertaking equality impact assessments, ensuring the feedback from employee voice groups and our communities is used to shape our decision making, policies and decisions.
- Utilise the Legal Services and Standards Manager to scrutinise our approach, ensuring professional standards are met and consistency during investigations and hearings, ensuring robustness in decision making, identifying trends and organisational learning.
- Continue to ensure that our members of staff are aware of the different ways and have confidence to raise concerns.
- Develop a change tool kit, ensuring that change is delivered successfully leaving people feeling valued and included.
- Develop a standards toolkit to ensure behaviour that exemplifies our STRIVE values and the Code of Ethics is recognised and that which falls below is addressed.

7.2 Continue to promote LFRS as an employer of choice recruiting a workforce which is diverse, meets the needs of the people of Lancashire and any employment needs identified in the workforce plan.

- Using our strong brand, create an inspiring and motivating employer brand, harnessing digital platforms to attract diverse new talent to either start or further enhance their careers.
- Where appropriate, use incentives including market supplements to attract the best talent enabling us to effectively recruit in competitive skills sectors.
- Actively profile the diversity of our applicants to ensure we continue to be an inclusive employer and our workforce is reflective of our community.
- Deliver a recruitment plan for Wholetime and On-Call firefighters supported by a programme of positive action, recruiting a workforce which is diverse, and which can deliver our aims.
- Explore opportunities of direct entry, working in partnership with UCLAN to assist in addressing any recruitment challenges.
- Deliver different methods of attracting people to On-Call, increasing availability.
- Utilise our community safety staff to engage with community networks promoting the range of employment opportunities with LFRS and attracting a diversity of candidates.

7.3 Continue to develop the capability and resilience of leaders who can energise their teams, who encourage flexibility, innovation, efficiency and who promote continuous improvement.

- Review our management development programmes ensuring our leadership team works collaboratively, provides, ethical, and inspirational leadership, motivating and inspiring their teams to achieve their potential.

- Deliver leadership development events to middle managers developing their skills and competences.
- Continue to promote accessibility of access to leadership qualifications, to grey and green book staff.
- Explore the different opportunities for direct entry into the Fire Service.
- Scope a mechanism for Crew Managers deploying them as EDI advocates.
- Promote different ways of accessing coaching and mentoring

7.4 Continue to embed talent management and succession planning, shaping the workforce to meet Service needs and which supports individuals to achieve their full potential.

- Promote to our leaders the different promotion and development pathways, ensuring that the most suitable leaders are recruited and appointed, developing an understanding of cultural competence.
- Quality assure the identification of talent through the appraisal process, ensuring a consistent approach, supporting individuals to achieve their full potential.
- Embed the behaviours contained within the Leadership Framework ensuring inclusive leaders who coach, give developmental feedback, and can support the Service to change and improve.
- Embed the Performance Management arrangements ensuring poor performance and behaviour contrary to our values and the Code of Ethics is challenged. In addition, ensuring a focus on completion of compulsory training and fitness.

7.5 Continue to promote a resilient and healthy workforce, actively engaging and responding to feedback.

- Actively promote improving personal resilience and commitment to workplace wellbeing.
- Develop an approach to people in crises, developing suicide awareness and prevention and broader mental health.
- Continue to promote fitness amongst green book staff, promoting health and nutrition.
- Broaden the existing workplace wellbeing toolbox talks which promote a holistic approach to health and wellbeing.
- Continue to deliver education campaigns promoting healthy lifestyles.
- Deliver bitesize learning on various wellbeing subjects.
- Deliver mental health awareness training.
- Review the way PTI support is delivered ensuring that it promotes and encourages fitness in a positive and regular way as efficiently as possible.

7.6 Continue to actively engage with our workforce, responding to feedback and involving staff in the identification of efficiencies, development of our plans and decision making.

- Meet regularly with representative bodies, actively engaging them in the development of plans.

Appendix A

- Regularly consult with our employee voice groups and other staff representative groups via the staff survey and other forms of consultation to obtain feedback, ensuring negative impact is identified and more informed policy and decision-making.
- Ensure a programme of ongoing watch, station and teams visits to actively engage with staff across the service and allow their voice to be heard.
- Seek to increase the use of technology to ensure leaders are accessible and regular communication takes place.
- Through our communications team, deliver a broad range of communications to ensure staff are kept informed and they have opportunities to share their views and give feedback.
- Embed the Team Brief ensuring that consistent messages are shared by leaders across the Service.
- Utilise technology to deliver bitesize chunks of information.
- Actively engage with our workforce in relation to our change and efficiency programmes.