

Lancashire Combined Fire Authority

Planning Committee

Meeting to be held on 14 July 2025

Protection Department update

(Appendix 1 refers)

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Executive Summary

This paper supports the presentation to Planning Committee and provides an overview of our actions and investment in our Protection (Fire Safety) department since the Grenfell Tower incident.

Recommendation

The Planning Committee is asked to note the report.

Information

Following the tragic incident at Grenfell Tower on the 14 June 2017 where 72 persons lost their lives, Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service (LFRS) have invested significantly to adapt and innovate in strengthening our Protection department which oversees our duties as the Fire Safety Enforcing Authority for the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 and other fire safety legislation.

With the introduction of new primary legislation (Fire Safety Act 2021 and Building Safety Act 2022) new statutory duties fell to LFRS to regulate. In addition, the creation of the Building Safety Regulator (BSR) sees LFRS act on behalf of the Health and Safety Executive in regulating relevant buildings. Alongside new legislation, changes impacting local authorities, the construction industry and competency requirements have required us to adapt and train staff to regulate circa 65,000 commercial premises in the county.

Over the previous 8 years, we have invested significantly in the Protection function, restructuring, creating new roles, new guidance and new performance metrics to ensure that we meet our nationally leading, risk-based intervention programme (RBIP).

Upskilling has also been undertaken with operational staff to allow them to both prevent incidents occurring, through the delivery of our Business Fire Safety Checks service, and respond more effectively if they do, through the provision of dedicated built environment training.

This investment in people is also supported by an investment in digital systems to allow staff to work more effectively and efficiently. New hard and software have been developed and procured to enable staff to better share information and provide a more consistent regulatory programme.

LFRS remains actively engaged locally, regionally and nationally to remain agile for further legislative changes along with significant changes to supporting guidance. Investment in

our Protection function continues, with further awareness training for operational crews and responding officers along with the procurement of a new digital system.

Business Risk

Medium – as the statutory regulator for the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 along with the impacts of the Fire Safety Act 2021, The Fire Safety (England) Regulations 2022 and the Building Safety Act 2022, plus other secondary legislation; a failure to adapt and invest in our Protection function may result in the inability to proportionately regulate the commercial premises of Lancashire. This may result in increased response activity, increased risk to the communities and judgement from His Majesties Inspectorate for Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services.

Environmental Impact

Positive – the regulation of commercial premises and Business Fire Safety Checks includes risk reduction activities such as arson vulnerability assessments and safe closing down procedures. These actions, along with regulating for improved fire safety provision, reduces the likelihood of fires impacting on the environment.

Equality & Diversity Implications

None.

HR Implications

None.

Financial Implications

LFRS have one allocated Fire Safety Inspector assigned to undertake work on behalf of the Building Safety Regulator. This role is self-funding through drawing down on government grant funding or recharging the Health and Safety Executive.

Grant funding for Protection Uplift is allocated to each Fire and Rescue Service. This funding was established following the Grenfell Tower Fire and currently stands at £237,833.80 for 25/26.

Legal Implications

LFRS are the statutory regulator for the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005. Other primary and secondary legislation introductions and changes also impact on LFRS as both a regulator and responding emergency service, these include the Fire Safety Act 2021, the Fire Safety (England) Regulations 2022 and the Building Safety Act 2022. Further changes to both legislation (primary and secondary), statutory and non-statutory guidance and governance arrangements affecting fire safety are expected over the coming years.

Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985

List of background papers

Paper:

Date:

Contact: