

# **Lancashire Combined Fire Authority**

Meeting to be held on 15 December 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.

Given the rapidly evolving regulatory change in building fire safety, an update on Fire Protection and Business Support may also be provided, detailing how the Service is adapting delivery whilst developing our workforce, to ensure that we keep pace with the changes and improve public and firefighter safety within the built environment.

### **Recommendation**

The Authority is asked to note the report.

## **Fire Safety Convictions**

### **Prosecutions**

On the 26 September 2025 the prosecution of the Article 5(3) person under the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order (FSO) (Mr Rajeshkumar Chechani) was sentenced for breaches of the FSO for a residential care home in Thornton-Cleveleys.

The initial inspection and further prohibition of the premises required forty-five residents to be relocated during the Covid-19 period to other care homes over a period of two weeks. This was due to substantial fire safety deficiencies being identified within the premises.

The sentencing outcome was as follows.

- Rajeshkumar Chechani was sentenced to 3 months imprisonment suspended for 12 months, given a £10,000 fine and LFRS were awarded £33,000 costs.

### **Prosecutions in the Court system**

The responsible person for two Houses of Multiple Occupation (HMO) premises, (located in Bacup and Darwen) pleaded guilty to breaches of the FSO on the 13 August 2025 at Preston Magistrates Court. A sentencing date is set for the 7 January 2026 at Preston Crown Court.

An NHS Trust and maintenance company were due to appear at Blackburn Magistrates Court on the 1 October 2025. This hearing was adjourned until the 18 November 2025 at Preston Magistrates Court.

The responsible persons and a company are to appear at Blackburn Magistrates Court on the 3 December 2025 for breaches of the FSO relating to a nightclub venue.

### **Prosecution cases currently being developed and reviewed**

Protection teams continue to investigate and build case files in relation to eleven other premises where offences are believed to have been committed under the FSO, which include the following:

- Care and Nursing Home x 1
- House in Multiple Occupation x 1
- Residential Flats x 2
- Mixed Commercial and Residential x 1
- Commercial premises (shop) x 1
- Commercial but not residential (Used for sleeping) x 1
- Large Nightclub x 1
- Theatre x 1
- Hotel x 1
- Supported Living x 1

### **Arson Risk Reduction**

#### **R v Samuel Beetham**

Address – Allendale Street, Colne

Date and Time of Call – 9 September 2023, 21:10hrs

This incident involved the deliberate ignition of items within the lounge of the defendant's purpose built flat. As well as the subsequent fire damage, the fire caused an explosion of a small gas cylinder in the lounge, resulting in damage to the roof structure.

The defendant was convicted of Reckless Arson (whether life endangered) and was sentenced to 3 years prison.

#### **R v Mohammed Khan**

Address – Waidshouse Road, Nelson

Date and Time of Call – 22 June 2024, 02:15hrs

This incident involved the deliberate act of igniting multiple fires in a bedroom in his home, when other members of his family were present.

The defendant was detained under the Mental Health Act. The Hospital Order is estimated to last several years.

#### **R v Lucy Armstrong**

Address – Pendleview Mental Health Unit, Blackburn

Date and Time of Call – 28 November 2024, 15:38hrs

This incident involved the deliberate act of igniting a mattress and bedding in a bedroom on the ward. Staff at the unit extinguished the fire before the arrival of LFRS.

The defendant received a Hospital Order, under The Mental Health Act.

### **R v Patrick Ruch**

Address – Naventis Court, Blackpool

Date and Time of Call – 23 March 2024, 21:31hrs

This incident involved the deliberate ignition of combustible materials in the communal bin chute room of a block of residential flats

The defendant pleaded guilty to reckless arson and was sentenced to 45 months in prison.

### **R v Gareth Morgan**

Address – Cheetham Meadow, Leyland

Date and Time of Call – 18 May 2025, 02:38hrs

This incident involved the deliberate ignition of a wheelie bin and contents against the door of a first floor flat. The fire spread to the flat front door, resulting in severe fire and smoke damage to the flat. The flat was occupied at the time of the fire, and the door was the only entrance/exit.

The defendant pleaded guilty to arson with intent to endanger life, and was sentenced to 7 years in prison, and received a 12-year restraining order.

There are also another 16 deliberate fire investigations currently ongoing within the criminal justice system.

### **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