

Lancashire Combined Fire Authority

Combined Fire Authority

Meeting to be held on Monday 15 December 2025

Governance review

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Executive Summary

From later next year, His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services, (HMICFRS) will be considering, as part of their future inspections, how the Authority's governance arrangements (which should be distinguished from the Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service (LFRS) internal and external governance, although there will be a need for symbiosis,) could and potentially do affect operational resilience, and efficacy, efficiency and effectiveness.

As part of a wider review, it has been considered that it would be in the best interests of transparency, compliance purposes and regulatory resilience, if all aspects of the Authority's current Constitution, including its procedural policies and protocols, which are not currently a formal part of the Authority's Constitution, are brought together, in a single codified and referenced document, in the best interests of the move to more transparent governance.

Given that a significant portion of the Authority are new to their roles, it would be beneficial for members to get involved and take part in the shaping of this document, so that input into its contents can be captured and any concerns raised before a final version of the constitutional document is ratified by the full Authority, in due course.

Recommendation(s)

The Authority is asked to approve the establishment of a Constitution Working Group to ensure member engagement in the review and updating of governance procedures and documents.

Information

Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service (LFRS) is undertaking a review of internal and external governance to ensure oversight and scrutiny arrangements remain effective and efficient at keeping the public safe from fire and other risks.

This will involve codifying and updating existing Authority procedures as set out in its constitution, scheme of delegation and standing orders. At the same time, arrangements will be reviewed against best practice, such as the Local Government

Association's Improvement and Assurance Framework, and external assurance will be sought.

There are several drivers for the review including the introduction by His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) of a new assessment of how each fire and rescue service is affected by its Authority's governance. Policy and legislation changes are also planned such as the government's plans for strengthening the standards and conduct framework for local authorities in England.

The Authority is asked to establish a member working group to work with officers to conduct this review ahead of any changes being brought to the Authority for approval. As the working group will not have any decision-making powers, there is no requirement for there to be political balance, but members may consider that in the collegiate interests of the Authority the group reflects broad political balance.

Business risk

None.

The existing provisions of the Authority's constitution, in its current state, will continue to be the reference point for all transactions of the Authority until the codified version of the Constitution has been legally adopted by the Authority.

Sustainability or Environmental Impact

None.

Equality and Diversity Implications

None.

Data Protection (GDPR)

Will the proposal(s) involve the processing of personal data? No

If the answer is yes, please contact a member of the Democratic Services Team to assist with the appropriate exemption clause for confidential consideration under part 2 of the agenda.

HR implications

None.

Financial implications

None.

Legal implications

The proposal to create a fully adopted Constitution will ultimately result in constitutional and administrative certainty, as well as resilient governance and transparency.

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