

# Lancashire Combined Fire Authority

## Performance Committee

Meeting to be held on 11 March 2026

### Dynamic Resource Management

(Appendix 1 refers)

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#### **Executive Summary**

This report and attached six-month evaluation of Dynamic Resource Management (DRM) focusses on its application, frequency, and effects across operational and financial areas. The report also reviews the impact of DRM on response standards, availability, prevention and protection activities, and impacts on mobilisations.

In summary, this report provides assurance that DRM has provided the required efficiency savings whilst maintaining excellent operational response performance within the standards set by Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) over the first six months of implementation.

#### **Recommendation**

The Performance Committee is asked to note the report and evaluation.

#### **Information**

Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service (LFRS) has robust systems in place to monitor, manage, and dynamically deploy our fire engines and firefighters to respond to emergencies across Lancashire. There are 58 fire engines and a number of specialist appliances in the county however some are often unavailable due to many reasons: ongoing incidents, training, maintenance, leave or sickness absence; unavailability of on-call staff; and other operational reasons.

#### **Dynamic Resource Management**

Dynamic resource management has introduced smarter and more efficient deployment of firefighters based on county-wide risk and it is used for advance planning.

There are 39 fire stations across Lancashire: 22 of these have at least one wholetime crewed fire engine and 17 have at least one on-call fire engine. Additional wholetime, day-crewed or on-call fire engines are also available at some of these stations which means they have two fire engines.

There are four fire stations with two wholetime crewed fire engines in the county: Blackburn, Blackpool, Burnley, and Preston. All four also have other fire stations close by, with additional fire engines ready to respond.

Previous policy was that when one of the two fire engines at our four stations with two wholetime engines was unavailable due to training or maintenance, it was not replaced or backfilled. However, if one was unavailable due to a crewing shortage (for example, due to leave or sickness) it was kept available by bringing in firefighters from other stations (we call this detached duties), or on overtime once detached duty options have been exhausted.

On 1 July 2025, the Service changed this approach to ensure sufficient resources are available to cover all risk areas across the county, using the latest technology and data. This provides the most effective and efficient use of resources for all communities across Lancashire. On some occasions, this also reduces costs through overtime requirements.

For example, firefighters at the four stations which have two wholetime fire engines may be detached, making the second engine temporarily unavailable, to maintain availability of a first fire engine somewhere else in the county. This is a methodical and strategic decision that ensures that we maintain a balanced, risk-based level of fire cover across the whole of Lancashire.

Before detaching firefighters from a station with two fire engines and making one temporarily unavailable, the first fire engine must be available as well as other fire engines in the area. We ensure a fire engine is available at every wholetime station in the county as a minimum.

Detachments are always used where possible before overtime, although overtime is still required on some occasions.

### **Dynamic Resource Management Evaluation**

Following an initial three-month evaluation, LFRS have undertaken a six-month evaluation of DRM, the full evaluation is attached as Appendix 1. Key findings are presented below:

Over the first six months (1 July – 31 December 2025), DRM has been used a total of 208 times in quarters 2 and 3 (Q2 and Q3). This represents that DRM has been enacted 14% of available shifts across the four stations.

Critical fire response times at DRM stations have improved by 8 seconds during Q1 - Q3 2025 compared with Q1 - Q3 2024, whereas response times across all LFRS stations over the same period have increased by 8 seconds. Whilst DRM cannot be attributed to the improved response times, it does highlight that DRM has not had detrimental impacts on response times and public safety.

Critical special service call response times at DRM stations have increased by 30 seconds in Q1 - Q3 2025 compared with Q1 - Q3 2024, whereas response times across all LFRS stations over the same period have increased by 8 seconds. Whilst this is a higher increase than overall, our response times remain substantially under the 13-minute average response time target, and our Key Performance Indicator demonstrates that performance levels continue to be met since the introduction of DRM.

The average number of Wholetime fire engines available has reduced by one in the six months since DRM was introduced, however this has been offset by an increase in On-Call fire engine availability over the same period. Combined availability has resulted in LFRS maintaining an average of 48 fire engines available at any one time since 1 July 2025, which is higher than the average availability over the same period last year.

The total cost of overtime shifts across Q2 and Q3 2025 was £47,185. For the same period in 2024, the overtime expenditure was £596,270, this equates to a saving of £549,085. This figure includes on-costs (such as national insurance) and is for overtime shifts directly related to maintaining fire engine availability. To enable direct comparison, one pay figure has been used (2025), therefore the 2024 cost will be slightly over reported as a 3.2% pay rise was awarded from July 2025.

The numbers of detachments in Q2 & Q3 2025 increased by only 0.6% from 713 in 2024, to 717 in 2025. In Q2 and Q3 2025 the cost of detachments was £22,055, in 2024 the cost of detachments over the same period was £21,198 (equivalent including 2025 pay rise), representing a 4% increase in 2025.

Enacting DRM and temporarily removing a resource from a two-pump station for a shift was anticipated to reduce the available time to complete prevention and protection activity. Overall, LFRS operational crews carried out 16% less Business Fire Safety Checks (BFSC) in Q2 and Q3 2025 compared with Q2 and Q3 2024, and 17% less Home Fire Safety Checks (HFSC) over the same period. Stations where DRM occurs have experienced a similar drop in both BFSC numbers (14%) and HFSC numbers (16%).

It was also anticipated that enacting DRM will impact the activity at neighbouring stations due to an increase in mobilisations. Whilst mobilisation numbers have increased for some surrounding fire engines, activity levels remain within tolerable levels, and most are within standard deviation. We have also seen a similar drop in BFSC and HFSC at those neighbouring stations aligned to increased operational activity.

## **Business Risk**

LFRS were required to find £500,000 efficiency savings in 2025/26, this has been achieved through DRM. Overtime was previously used to supplement shortfalls in crewing where any wholetime appliance would have otherwise been unavailable, effectively maintaining 100% of LFRS wholetime assets at all times. This approach was incongruent with other established procedures which frequently see appliances from both one and two pump stations being unavailable for an entire shift due to training. This happens routinely without any backfilling of that resource to maintain availability. Nationally, there is a requirement to become more efficient and effective utilising risk and demand to align resources. This process ensures that LFRS maintain sufficient resources whilst reducing spending. Whilst temporarily making a second appliance unavailable may have an impact on response times, this process ensures there is a minimum level of cover provided by other fire appliances prior to being made unavailable.

## **Sustainability or Environmental Impact**

There is a potential for a slight environmental impact associated with DRM as there may be both increases and decreases in the movement of staff due to not requiring all appliances to be protected all of the time, however conversely moving staff around to maintain availability where it is needed.

## **Equality and Diversity Implications**

A full equality impact assessment has been undertaken; it did not identify any potential discrimination or adverse impacts.

## **Data Protection (GDPR)**

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

## **HR implications**

There are no human resource implications arising from this process.

## **Financial implications**

The financial implications of DRM have been analysed and are reported on within the report which detail significant cost efficiencies.

## **Legal implications**

The DRM process is in line with our Community Risk Management Plan 2022-27, supporting strategies, and performance indicators. The Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP) went through full consultation as part of its development, as is envisaged by the Fire and Rescue National Framework for England.

## **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