Appendix 1

Lancashire Combined Fire Authority
Performance Committee

Wednesday, 11 March 2026, at 10.00 am in the Main Conference Room, Service Headquarters, Fulwood.

Minutes

Present:	
Councillors	
S Asghar	
A Riggott	
S Sidat MBE	
J Tetlow (Vice-Chair)	
E Worthington (Chair)	

Officers
S Pink, Assistant Chief Fire Officer (LFRS) M Hamer, Area Manager, Prevention and Protection (LFRS) P Jones, Area Manager, Head of Service Delivery (LFRS) K McCreesh, Acting Area Manager (LFRS) T Powell, Area Manager, Head of Service Improvement (LFRS) D Howell, Monitoring Officer (LFRS) S Hunter, Member Services Manager (LFRS) L Barr, Member Services Officer (LFRS)

1-25/26	**Apologies For Absence**
	Apologies were received from Councillor J Hugo, and County Councillors A Blake, M Clifford, G Mirfin, and M Ritson.
2-25/26	**Disclosure of Pecuniary and Non-Pecuniary Interests**
	None received.
3-25/26	**Minutes of Previous Meeting**
	Resolved: - That the Minutes of the last meeting held on the 03 December 2025 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.
4-25/26	**Q3 Measuring Progress Report**
	The Assistant Chief Fire Officer (ACFO) presented a comprehensive report to the

Performance Committee. This was the 3rd quarterly report for 2025/26 as detailed in the Community Risk Management Plan 2022-2027.

In quarter 3, two Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), 1.2.3 Staff Absence Greenbook, and 2.9 Business Fire Safety Checks were shown in positive exception and one KPI was shown in negative exception, 1.2.1 Staff Wholetime Absence Wholetime (WT).

Members examined each indicator in turn focusing on those KPIs in exception as follows:

KPI 1 – Valuing our people so that they can focus on making Lancashire safer

1.1 Overall Staff Engagement

Members received an update on how staff were engaged during the period.

From October to December 2025, 27 station visits were carried out by Principal Officers and Area Managers as part of the service-wide engagement programme.

Forty-seven wellbeing interactions were undertaken ranging from workshops with crews to wellbeing support dog interactions.

In November, the Service held its annual Celebration of our People event to recognise dedication and achievements across the organisation. More than 50 people were honoured with Long Service Good Conduct Awards, Star Awards, Chief Fire Officer's Commendations, Bravery Awards, Academic Achievements and Humanitarian Medals. One Hundred and thirty-six submissions were received from members of staff nominating their colleagues for a Star Award.

Engagement took place with operational staff regarding several improvements to Tarleton, Preston, and Fulwood fire stations and a staff poll was conducted to ascertain interest levels in a salary sacrifice scheme.

The Service's new Modern Ways of Working Forum was launched and promoted which encouraged staff across the Service to submit ideas for smarter ways of working using technology that would lead to improvements in efficiency and productivity.

A new regular Watch Managers' Forum was also established to keep wholetime and functional watch managers informed of what was happening in service delivery and give them the opportunity to share feedback and be involved in changes.

The latest staff survey was launched on 2 July 2025 and ran for eight and a half weeks until 29 August 2025. An independent research service coordinated the survey. It was delivered online and via paper copies which were sent to all stations.

The survey was supported by 51 visits to on-call and wholetime crews on station by the Communications Team. Three focus groups with on-call staff, wholetime supervisory managers, and support staff were also held to gain qualitative

feedback to complement the survey data. In total, 511 responses to the survey were received (equating to 44% of staff).

The responses reflected good representation across different roles, ranks, and geographical areas of the Service.

The engagement index was calculated based on five questions that measured pride, advocacy, attachment, inspiration, and motivation; factors that were understood to be important features shared by staff who were engaged with the organisation.

For each respondent, an engagement score was calculated as the average score across the five questions, where strongly disagree was equivalent to 0, disagree was equivalent to 25, neither agree nor disagree was equivalent to 50, agree was equivalent to 75 and strongly agree was equivalent to 100. The engagement index was then calculated as the average engagement score in the organisation. This approach meant that a score of 100 was equivalent to all respondents saying strongly agree to all five engagement questions, while a score of 0 was equivalent to all respondents saying strongly disagree to all five engagement questions.

Year	Engagement Index	Response Rate
2025	69%	44%
2023	74%	49%
2020	79%	44%
2018	70%	43%
2016	64%	31%

The survey results highlighted areas of success as well as areas for development and the feedback would be considered by the Service and used to inform current and future planning. Feedback would also be provided to staff to demonstrate that views had been listened to in terms of action taken as a result.

1.2.1 Staff Absence Wholetime

This indicator measured the cumulative number of shifts (days) lost due to sickness for all wholetime staff divided by the total average headcount strength. This followed the National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) reporting methodology.

Annual Standard: Not more than 8 shifts lost.
Annual Shifts Lost ÷ 4 quarters = 2

Quarter shifts lost: 3.04
Cumulative total number of shifts lost: 7.43

The negative exception report was due to the number of shifts lost through absence per employee being below the Service target for quarter 3.

The element of that section of the report referred to sickness absence rates for the period 01 April 2025 to 31 December 2025.

The agreed target performance level was 8 shifts lost per employee per year for

wholetime staff, which equated to a target of 6.00 shifts lost per employee per year for quarter 1 to quarter 3. The actual shifts lost for the period for that group of staff was 7.43, which was 1.43 shifts above target. During the same period of the previous year, 6.05 shifts were lost which was an increase of 1.38 shifts lost per wholetime employee compared to the same period of the previous year.

A total of 4,542 wholetime absence shifts lost = 7.43 against a target of 6.00.

The number of cases of long-term absence which spanned over the total of the 3 months remained at 4 cases in Q3. The absence reasons were:

- Mental Health 3 cases
- Other absence types 1 case

Two hundred shifts were lost during quarter 3 as a result of the above four cases of long-term absence. This was in comparison to 114 shifts which were lost during the same quarter of 2024-25. Those cases accounted for 0.33 shifts lost per person over the quarter.

There were 33 cases of long-term absence which were recorded within the 3 months:

- Musculo Skeletal 13 cases
- Mental Health 12 cases
- Hospital/Post Operative Procedure 2 cases
- Other absence types 6 cases

There were 301 shifts lost which related to Respiratory related absences including Coronavirus absence. This was compared to 61 shifts lost in Q1, 132 shifts lost in Q2 of 2025-26 and 205 shifts lost in the same quarter of 2024-25.

The Service managed staff absence through a formal Absence Management Policy supported by the Human Resources (HR) system iTrent, which provided monthly absence reports to managers and HR Business Partners. Employees absent due to mental health or stress were referred early to Occupational Health, and all returning employees completed return-to-work interviews and relevant risk assessments.

Support mechanisms included Occupational Health guidance, Trauma Risk Management (TRiM), the Employee Assistance Programme (EAP), and the Firefighters Charity. If an employee did not return promptly, absence review meetings were held to explore support options such as modified duties or redeployment; outcomes could include dismissal or ill-health retirement.

Formal review thresholds were triggered by:

- Short-term absence: 3+ period in 6 months or 14 days absence; or
- Long-term absence: reviews at 3,6,9 and 11 months.

Recent increases in absence could possibly relate to respiratory illness, although no national rise in Covid/flu was evident. Flu vaccination reimbursement was offered; however, an earlier offering this intervention might improve absence rates.

The Service was analysing absence data for trends, such as school-holiday spikes. Recent formal absence meetings included 10 at Stage 1 and none at Stages 2 or 3. Managers aimed to facilitate earlier returns through meaningful modified duties.

Occupation Health Unit referrals were high across Q1-Q3, including many follow-up appointments. Referrals could be preventative as well as related to absence. A breakdown between absence-related and non-absence related referrals was not available.

In response to a question from the Chair as to whether the Service compared against other Services, such as the Police, in relation to Musculo skeletal absences, the ACFO explained that the Service did not benchmark against the Police but did use national sickness data for comparison of categories and themes.

Councillor Sidat queried whether the Musculo skeletal injuries were related to being on-duty and how they were managed. The ACFO advised that the data for injuries revealed a mixture of internal and external factors as the nature of the job was physical, some injuries could occur in the workplace, and some injuries could also be attributed to recreational activities outside of the workplace. To manage those types of injuries, the Service provided high-quality physiotherapy, Occupational Health Support, and rehabilitation through the Firefighters Charity. Proactively, the Service encouraged a fitness culture providing staff with gym facilities to maintain fitness. The number of referrals to physiotherapy had increased, and feedback from staff had been positive.

In response to a question from County Councillor Asghar regarding mental health support, the ACFO confirmed that there was immediate support through the TRiM programme for anyone who had experienced a traumatic incident. For long term cases, there was access to a Psychotherapist, The Employee Assistance Programme, and the Firefighters Charity. The ACFO had met with the National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) to discuss proactive action taken prior to operational stress such as the Hope Programme which was delivered through the Firefighters Charity which helped to build resilience, and assisting managers to recognise low level indicators of stress to prevent situations from reaching crisis point. Area Manager, Phil Jones, added that the Urban Search and Rescue (USAR) and International Search and Rescue (ISAR), who dealt with devastating and traumatic incidents at home and overseas, had an enhanced, bespoke mental health support programme designed to help manage the risk of developing PTSD.

1.2.2 Staff Absence On-Call (OC)

This indicator measured the percentage of contracted hours lost due to sickness for all on-call contracted staff.

Annual Standard: No more than 2.5% lost as a % of available hours of cover.

Cumulative on-call absence (as a % of available hours cover) at the end of the quarter, 1.51%.

1.2.3 Staff Absence Greenbook

	The ACFO explained that Grey book referred to operational staff and Green book referred to support staff who were generally non-operational. There were some dual contract green book staff who provided on-call cover whilst fulfilling their green book role. This indicator measured the cumulative number of shifts (days) lost due to sickness for all green book support staff divided by the average strength. Annual Standard: Not more than 8 shifts lost. Annual Shifts Lost ÷ 4 quarters: 2 Quarter shifts lost: 0.97 Cumulative shifts lost: 4.10 The positive exception report was due to the number of shifts lost through absence per employee being below the Service target for quarter 3. The agreed target performance level was 8 shifts lost per employee per year for Green Book staff, which equated to a target of 6.00 shifts lost per employee per year for quarters 1 to quarter 3. The actual shifts lost for the period for this group was 4.10, which was 1.90 within target. During the same period of the previous year, 5.10 shifts were lost which was a decrease of 1.00 shifts lost per green book employee compared to the same period last year. During the period, April – December 2025, absence statistics showed non-uniformed personnel absence above target for the quarter with 0.97 shifts lost in the quarter against a target of 2.00 shifts lost. 1,049 non-uniformed absence shifts lost = 4.10 against a target of 6.00 during quarters 1 to quarter 3. There were no cases of long-term absence which spanned over the total of the 6 months. The number of long-term absence cases recorded in the quarter decreased from 10 in Q2 to 4 in Q3: • Mental Health 2 cases • Other absence types 2 cases During the quarter, 60 shifts were lost as a result of the 4 cases of long-term absences, this was in comparison to 406 shifts lost during the same quarter of 2024-25. These cases accounted for 0.23 shifts lost per person over the quarter. Respiratory related absences accounted for 83 lost shifts, which included Coronavirus absence. This was compared to 40 shifts lost in the same quarter of 2024-25. The Service managed staff absence through a formal Absence Management Policy supported by the Human Resources (HR) system iTrent, which provided monthly absence reports to managers and HR Business Partners. Employees absent due to mental health or stress were referred early to Occupational Health, and all returning employees completed return-to-work interviews and relevant risk assessments.

Support mechanisms included Occupational Health guidance, Trauma Risk Management (TRiM), the Employee Assistance Programme (EAP), and the Firefighters Charity. If an employee did not return promptly, absence review meetings were held to explore support options such as modified duties or redeployment; outcomes could include dismissal or ill-health retirement.

Formal review thresholds were triggered by:

- Short-term absence: 3+ period in 6 months or 14 days absence; or
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The Service was analysing absence data for trends, such as school-holiday spikes. Recent formal absence meetings included 10 at Stage 1 and none at Stages 2 or 3. Managers aimed to facilitate earlier returns through meaningful modified duties.

Occupation Health Unit referrals were high across Q1-Q3, including many follow-up appointments. Referrals could be preventative as well as related to absence. A breakdown between absence-related and non-absence related referrals was not available.

In response to a question from the Chair as to whether any cases of respiratory illnesses were work/smoke-related, the ACFO explained that there were none to her knowledge and highlighted that Firefighters underwent a medical examination every three years which included a lung function test and were checked for occupational exposure to contaminants.

1.3.1 Workforce Diversity

This indicator measured diversity as a percentage.

Combined diversity percentage of grey book (operational) and green book (support) staff. The percentages outside of the brackets represented the current quarter, with the percentage within the brackets illustrating the same quarter of the previous year:

Gender:	Female 22%(23%)	Male 78%(77%)	
Ethnicity:	BME 4%(4%)	White 91%(92%)	Not stated 5%(4%)
Sexual Orientation:	LGBT 5%(4%)	Heterosexual 63%(60%)	Not stated 32%(36%)
Disability:	Disability 4%(3%)	No disability 93%(94%)	Not stated 3%(3%)

Diversity percentage by Grey Book Staff and Green Book Staff. Counts included double counts if the member of staff was dual contracted between Grey and Green Book.

Separate diversity percentage of grey book (operational) and green book (support) staff:

Gender:	Female	Grey book 11%	Green book 62%
	Male	Grey book 89%	Green book 38%
Ethnicity:	BME	Grey book 3%	Green book 6%
	White	Grey book 92%	Green book 85%
	Not stated	Grey book 5%	Green book 9%
Sexual Orientation:	LGBT	Grey book 5%	Green book 3%
	Heterosexual	Grey book 62%	Green book 68%
	Not stated	Grey book 33%	Green book 29%
Disability:	Disability	Grey book 3%	Green book 6%
	No disability	Grey book 95%	Green book 88%
	Not stated	Grey book 2%	Green book 6%

1.3.2 Workforce Diversity Recruited

This new indicator measured workforce diversity recruited as a percentage.

Combined diversity percentage of grey book (operational) and green book (support) staff. The percentages outside of the brackets represented the current quarter, with the percentage within the brackets illustrating the same quarter of the previous year:

Gender:	Female 22%(39%)	Male 78%(61%)	
Ethnicity:	BME 1%(7%)	White 91%(65%)	Not Stated 8%(28%)
Sexual Orientation:	LGBT 4%(3%)	Heterosexual 86%(85%)	Not stated 10%(12%)
Disability:	Disability 1%(7%)	No disability 94%(88%)	Not stated 5%(5%)

During quarter 3, there were a total of 43 new entrants.

It was noted that a further breakdown of the data would not be provided as it may enable the identification of individuals, due to the small numbers of persons recruited during certain periods.

1.4 Staff Accidents

This indicator measured the number of accidents which occurred to staff members at work within the quarter: Wholetime, On-Call and Greenbook.

Total number of staff accidents, 21 for quarter 3; year to date 44; previous year to date 45. Quarterly activity increased 31.25% (5 incidents) over the same quarter of the previous year. Year to date activity decreased 2.22% over the same period of the previous year.

KPI 2 - Preventing, fires and other emergencies from happening and Protecting people and property when fires happen

2.1 Risk Map Score

This indicator measured the fire risk in each Super Output Area (SOA), of which there were 941. Risk was determined using fire activity over the previous 3 fiscal years along with a range of demographic data, such as population and deprivation. The County risk map score was updated annually and presented to the Performance Committee in the quarter 1 reporting period.

Annual Standard: To reduce the risk in Lancashire – an annual reduction in the County risk map score.

(Dwelling Fires ÷ Total Dwellings) + (Dwelling Fire Casualties ÷ Resident Population x 4) + Building Fire + (IMD x 2) = Risk Score.

The current score was 30,532 and the previous year's score was 30,750 which meant that the fire risk continued to reduce.

2.2 Overall Activity

This indicator measured the number of incidents that LFRS attended with one or more pumping appliances. Incidents attended included fires, special service calls, false alarms, and collaborative work undertaken with other emergency services i.e.: missing person searches on behalf of the Lancashire Constabulary (LanCon) and gaining entry incidents at the request of the North West Ambulance Service (NWAS).

Incidents attended, year to date 13,879; previous year to date 12,936. Quarterly activity decreased 1.92% over the same quarter of the previous year.

In quarter 3, the Service attended 4,185 incidents. The report presented a chart which represented the count and percentage that each activity had contributed to the overall quarter's activity:

- Total False Alarm Calls (due to apparatus, good intent and malicious) – 1263, 30%
- Good Intent False Alarm – 651, 16%
- Malicious False Alarm – 52, 1%
- Total Primary Fire Calls (accidental dwelling / building and deliberate dwelling / commercial fires and other primary fires) – 456, 11%
- Total Secondary Fire Calls (deliberate and accidental fires) – 527, 13%
- Total Special Service Calls (critical incidents, gaining entry, RTCs, Flooding and other critical incidents) – 1220, 29%

2.3 Accidental Dwelling Fires (ADF)

This indicator reported the number of primary fires where a dwelling had been affected, and the cause of the fire had been recorded as 'Accidental' or 'Not

known'.

Members noted that a primary fire was one involving property (excluding derelict property) or any fires involving casualties, rescues or any fire attended by 5 or more pumping appliances.

Accidental Dwelling Fires, 200 in quarter 3; year to date 563; previous year to date 518. Quarterly activity increased 5.82% over the same quarter of the previous year.

2.3.1 ADF – Harm to people: Casualties

This indicator reported the number of fire related fatalities, slight and serious injuries at primary fires where a dwelling had been affected and the cause of fire had been recorded as 'Accidental or Not known.'

A slight injury was defined as; a person attending hospital as an outpatient (not precautionary check). A serious injury was defined as; at least an overnight stay in hospital as an in-patient.

Fatal	1 in quarter 3; year to date 2; previous year to date 6
Injuries appear Serious	4 in quarter 3; year to date 7; previous year to date 6
Injuries appear Slight	12 in quarter 3; year to date 24; previous year to date 24

County Councillor Tetlow queried the maximum of 10 casualties and the ACFO confirmed that 10 casualties represented the tolerance level. In quarter three, there had been a high number of casualties despite a relatively low number of incidents. The Service used the data to analyse trends such as age, and cause of the incidents which helped inform future prevention delivery to high-risk individuals.

Members noted that the casualties related to residential incidents.

2.3.2 ADF – Harm to property: Extent of damage (fire severity)

This indicator reported the number of primary fires where a dwelling had been affected, and the cause of fire had been recorded as ''Accidental' or 'Not known'.

Extent of fire, heat and smoke damage was recorded at the time the 'stop' message was sent and included all damage types.

The table in the report showed a breakdown of fire severity with a directional indicator that compared:

Current quarter, combined percentage of 86% against same quarter of the previous year, combined percentage of 87%.

Combined quarterly percentage decreased 0.77% over the same quarter of the previous year.

2.4 Accidental Building Fires (ABF) (Commercial Premises)

This indicator reported the number of primary fires where a building had been

affected (which was other than a dwelling or a private building associated with a dwelling), and the cause of fire had been recorded as ‘'Accidental' or 'Not known'.

ABF (Commercial Premises), 45 in quarter 3; year to date 161; previous year to date 188. Quarterly activity decreased 21.05% over the same quarter of the previous year.

2.4.1 ABF (Commercial Premises) – Harm to property: Extent of damage (fire severity)

This indicator reported the number of primary fires where a building had been affected (which was other than a dwelling or a private building associated with a dwelling), and the cause of fire had been recorded as ‘'Accidental' or 'Not known'.

Extent of fire, heat and smoke damage was recorded at the time the ‘stop’ message was sent and included all damage types.

The table in the report showed a breakdown of fire severity with a directional indicator that compared:

- current quarter, combined percentage of 77% against
- same quarter of the previous year, combined percentage of 68%.

Combined quarterly percentage had therefore increased 9.36% over the same quarter of the previous year.

2.5 Accidental Building Fires (Non-Commercial Premises)

This indicator reported the number of primary fires where a private garage, private shed, private greenhouse, private summerhouse, or other private non-residential building had been affected, and the cause of fire had been recorded as ‘Accidental’ or ‘Not known.’

ABF (Non-Commercial Premises), 16 in quarter 3; year to date 94; previous year to date 58. Quarterly activity remained static against the same quarter of the previous year.

2.5.1 ABF (Non-Commercial premises: Private garages and sheds) – Harm to property: Extent of damage (fire severity)

This indicator reported the number of primary fires where a private garage, private shed, private greenhouse, private summerhouse, or other private non-residential building had been affected, and the cause of fire had been recorded as ‘Accidental’ or ‘Not known.’

Extent of fire, heat and smoke damage was recorded at the time the ‘stop’ message was sent and included all damage types.

The table in the report showed a breakdown of fire severity with a directional indicator that compared:

- current quarter, combined percentage of 38% against
- same quarter of the previous year, combined percentage of 37%.

Combined quarterly activity had therefore increased 0.50% over the same quarter of the previous year.

2.6 Deliberate Fires Total: Specific performance measure of deliberate fires

This indicator provided an overall measure of primary and secondary fires where the cause of fire had been recorded as deliberate.

Deliberate Fires – 370 in quarter 3; year to date 1,773; previous year to date 1,474. Quarterly activity decreased 16.10% against the same quarter of the previous year.

2.6.1 Deliberate Fires – Dwellings

This indicator reported the number of primary fires where a dwelling had been affected, and the cause of fire had been recorded as deliberate.

Deliberate Fires – Dwellings, 21 in quarter 3, year to date 57; previous year to date 65. Quarterly activity decreased 8.70% over the same quarter of the previous year.

2.6.2 Deliberate Fires - Commercial Premises

This indicator reported the number of primary fires where the property type was a building, other than a dwelling or a private building associated with a dwelling, and the cause of fire had been recorded as deliberate.

Deliberate Fires – Commercial Premises, 38 in quarter 3; year to date 117; previous year to date 102.

Quarterly activity increased 22.58% over the same quarter of the previous year.

A second incident activity line was shown on the graph which excluded Crown premises which fell outside of the Service's legislative jurisdiction.

County Councillor Riggott asked how the Service worked with Crown Premises to minimise the risk of deliberate fires. Area Manager, Matt Hamer responded that incidents were managed under the Fire Safety Order (FSO), although responsibility for Crown premises fell within the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Justice and the Crown Inspectorate. The Service worked with crown premises, including probation services and prisons, and the Fire Investigation Team would collect and analyse data from fire investigations. It had been found that some inmates had used electronic smoking materials as an ignition source for attacks or self-protection purposes. To address deliberate fires, the Service had undertaken a trial with tamper proof vapes, and fire safety talks were given by the Community Safety Team. Additionally, 12 weeks pre-release the Service provided a half day safety session covering safety information and relevant legislative changes. If an incident had malicious intent, prison sentences could be extended to act as a deterrent, however, through the Prison Working Group chaired by the Service, prevention and

protection education was considered the most effective approach.

In response to a question from County Councillor Asghar regarding the response from inmates to the safety packages delivered by the Service, Area Manager explained that inmates had been involved with the design of the package and the feedback had been positive. Engagement was enhanced through the family centre with advice shared with inmates' families and the Service worked with the art department in prisons to design prevention messaging which added value to the initiative.

2.6.3 Deliberate Fires – Other (rubbish, grassland, vehicles etc).

This indicator reported the number of primary and secondary fires where the property type was other than a building, except where the building was recorded as derelict, and the cause of fire had been recorded as deliberate.

The majority of deliberate fires were outdoor secondary fires and included grassland and refuse fires. Derelict vehicle fires were also included under secondary fires.

Deliberate Fires – Other, 311 in quarter 3; year to date 1,599; previous year to date 1,307. Quarterly activity decreased 19.64% over the same quarter of the previous year.

In response to a question from the Chair regarding whether a lack of bins in public spaces contributed to bin and rubbish fires, the ACFO advised that bins fires could be accidental attributed to discarded smoking materials, but rubbish fires were not linked to evidence where they were due to the amount of lack of bins. Area Manager, Phil Jones explained that periods of dry weather contributed with some individuals setting rubbish fires. Accurate reporting by crews had been encouraged, noting that incidents were only classifying as deliberate if that was known.

2.7 Home Fire Safety Checks

This indicator reported the percentage of completed Home Fire Safety Checks (HFSC), excluding refusals, carried out where the risk score had been determined to be high.

An improvement was shown if:

- the total number of HFSC's completed was greater than the comparable quarter of the previous year; and
- the percentage of high HFSC outcomes was greater than the comparable quarter of the previous year.

HFSCs completed, 5,559 in quarter 3; year to date 22,901; previous year to date 18,268. Quarterly activity decreased 7.9% against the same quarter of the previous year.

HFSCs with high-risk outcomes, Quarter 3, 52%; previous year Quarter 2, 51%.

High risk outcomes increased 0.9% against the same quarter of the previous year.

Members noted that Dynamic Resource Management could have a direct impact on prevention activity due to fire engine cover.

2.8 Numbers of prevention activities such as Childsafe, wasted lives etc

Members received an update on the number of sessions delivered against the following prevention activities during the quarter:

ChildSafe, 279 sessions delivered to 7,871 students;
RoadSense, 242 sessions delivered to 7,761 students;
SENDSafe, 3 sessions delivered to 49 students;
Wasted Lives, 44 sessions delivered to 4,153 students;
Biker Down, 3 sessions delivered to 38 attendees;
FIRES, 46 referrals opened prior to Q3 and carried over. 38 referrals received in Q3. 41 referrals closed in Q3. 43 referrals carried to 2025-26, Q4;
Partner Training (including care providers), 22 sessions delivered to 330 delegates;

Specific Education packages – delivered Water Safety, BrightSparx, ASB, Deliberate Fire Setting etc (Covers key stages 2, 3 and 4). 134 in-person BrightSparx sessions to 18,137 pupils. 6 virtual delivery BrightSparx sessions at 25 schools, to 14,748 pupils.

Arson Threat Referrals – 193.

In response to a question from Councillor S Sidat as to whether the BrightSparx education package included firework safety, Area Manager, Matt Hamer confirmed that the package covered bonfires, safety for firework and sparkler use at home, and the action to take in the event of a burn. Ideally, the Service advocated attending organised, controlled events.

2.9 Business Fire Safety Checks

This indicator reported the number of Business Fire Safety Check (BFSC's) completed and whether the result was satisfactory or unsatisfactory. If the result of a BFSC was unsatisfactory, fire safety advice would be provided to help the business comply with The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005. If critical fire safety issues were identified, then a business safety advisor would conduct a follow-up intervention.

- The pro rata BFSC target was delivered through each quarter.

A +/-10% tolerance was applied to the completed BFSCs and the year to date (YTD) BFSCs, against both the quarterly and YTD targets. When both counts were outside of the 10% tolerance, they would be deemed in exception which enabled local delivery to flex with the needs of their district plan over the quarters.

BFSCs completed, 719 in quarter 3; Cumulative 2,241; YTD target, 1,875; previous YTD 2,750.

Cumulative YTD BFSCs being satisfactory, 2,024. Top 5 completed satisfactory premise types (Shops 723, Offices 347, Factories/Warehouses 274, Other Workplaces 207, Other Public Premises 141).

Cumulative YTD BFSCs being unsatisfactory, 217. Top 5 completed unsatisfactory premise types (Shops 83, Factories/Warehouses 33, Other Workplaces 27, Offices 17, Licensed Premises 15).

The positive exception report was due to the number of completed Business Fire Safety Checks (BFSCs) being greater than 10% of the quarterly target, and the cumulative year to date target.

Service delivery personnel had carried out BFSCs in their respective districts over the last 2 years, and BFSC work was now embedded into business-as-usual activity. The KPI dashboard and District Intel Profiles were used to identify and target both the business types and business locations for that activity.

Councillor S Sidat asked if the Service carried out enforcement regarding the sale of fireworks. Area Manager, Matt Hamer explained that the Service worked closely with Trading Standards. The Fire Safety Team received a list of licenced establishments which was shared with operational crews for information in the event of an incident. Unlicenced sales were picked up through BFSCs and reported to Trading Standards who were the regulatory body. The ACFO advised that on Bonfire Night, a multi-agency approach was used to target the improper use of fireworks with monitoring taking place through attendance at North West Fire Control and intervention taking place where necessary.

The Chair referenced a ski resort bar fire in Switzerland and asked if that incident influenced prevention work in pubs and clubs. Area Manager, Matt Hamer advised that sparklers and a polystyrene roof had been involved in the ski resort fire, with two similar incidents occurring in the north west. One of the incidents involved sparklers in bottles and helium balloons, and the other was the ignition of green foliage. A newsletter had been relayed through licensing teams to focus on the fire rating and risk assessment of decorations in establishments. The Service would go through findings from incidents, taking lessons, which informed education and safety messages for responsible persons.

2.9.1 Fire Safety Activity (including Business Fire Safety Checks)

This indicator reported the number of Fire Safety Enforcement inspections carried out within the period which resulted in supporting businesses to improve and become compliant with fire safety regulations or where formal action of enforcement and prosecution had been taken for those that failed to comply.

An improvement was shown if the percentage of audits that required formal activity was greater than the comparable quarter of the previous year.

Total Fire Safety Enforcement Inspections, Quarter 3, 404;
Formal Activity in Quarter 3, 8%, same quarter of the previous year 8%.
Quarterly activity remained static against the same quarter of the previous year.

Members noted the cumulative number of Fire Safety inspections undertaken for 2025/26 was 1,248.

2.10 Building Regulation Consultations (BRC) (number and completed on time)

Where the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 applied to premises (or would apply following building work) the building control body must consult with LFRS for comments / advice regarding fire safety. LFRS should make any comments in writing within 15 working days from receiving a BRC.

This indicator provided Members with information on the number of building regulations consultations received during the period together with improvement actions.

In Quarter 3, Building Regulation Consultations received 265, of which 242 were completed within the timeframe (LFRS should make comments in writing within 15 working days of receiving a BRC).

Area Manager, Matt Hamer commented that requests for further information could affect the timeframe for completion, as could staffing levels at times, and added that the Service was working to improve the number of competent staff.

KPI 3 - Responding to fire and other emergencies quickly

3.1 Critical Fire Response – 1st Fire Engine Attendance

This indicator reported the 'Time of Call' (TOC) and 'Time in Attendance' (TIA) of the first fire engine arriving at the incident in less than the relevant response standard.

The response standards included call handling and fire engine response time for the first fire engine attending a critical fire, as follows: -

- Very high-risk area = 6 minutes
- High risk area = 8 minutes
- Medium risk area = 10 minutes
- Low risk area = 12 minutes

The response standards were determined by the risk map score and subsequent risk grade for the location of the fire.

Standards were achieved when the time between the 'Time of Call' (TOC) and 'Time in Attendance' (TIA) of the first fire engine arriving at the incident, averaged over the quarter, was less than the relevant response standard. Expressed in minutes & seconds.

Critical Fire Response – 1st Fire Engine Attendance, Quarter 3, Very High 05:31 min; High 06:06 min, Medium 07:19 min, Low 09:03 min.

Q3 overall 07:49 min. Year to date overall 07:50 min. Previous year to date overall 07:40 min.

3.2 Critical Special Service Response – 1st Fire Engine Attendance

This indicator reported the 'Time of Call' (TOC) and 'Time in Attendance' (TIA) of the first fire engine arriving at the incident in less than the relevant response standard.

The response standard included how long it took the first fire engine to respond to critical special service (non-fire) incidents where there was a risk to life such as road traffic collisions, rescues, and hazardous materials incidents. For these critical special service call incidents there was a single response standard of 13 minutes (which measured call handling time and fire engine response time).

Critical Special Service Response – 1st Fire Engine Attendance, 08:44 min in quarter 3; year to date 08:42 min; previous year to date 08:36 min.

In response to a question from the Chair regarding animal rescues and whether mistreated animals were reported to the RSPCA, the ACFO stated that the Service had a duty of care to report mistreated animals to the RSPCA. However, the Service was generally called to animal rescues where animals were in distress such as horses entering ice. Additionally, Acting Area Manager, Kirsty McCreesh advised that the Service had access to Vets who could assist when needed and could make direct referrals to the RSPCA.

3.3 Total Fire Engine Availability

This indicator measured the availability of the 1st fire engine at each of the 39 fire stations. It was measured as the percentage of time the 1st fire engine was available to respond compared to the total time in the period.

Standard: to be in attendance within response standard target on 90% of occasions.

Total Fire Engine Availability, 89.67% in quarter 3; year to date 89.19%; previous year to date 87.45%.

Quarterly availability increased 0.37% over the same quarter of the previous year.

KPI 4 - Delivering value for money in how we use our resources

4.1 Progress Against Allocated Budget

Members received an update on spend against the approved budget for the year.

The annual budget for 2025/26 was set at £77.5 million. At the end of quarter 3 there was a small underspend of £0.2m (budget £55 million, spend £54.8 million). This was mainly attributable to savings on Wholetime pay due to the structure reducing earlier than anticipated, offset against additional on call costs and higher

than budgeted pay awards of 3.2% for all staff compared to the 3% budgeted.

The annual revised capital budget for 2025/26 was £12.6 million and spend at the end of December was £3.9 million. Slippage of £6.7 million had been identified.

Quarter 3 variance -0.26% (Revenue budget variance).

4.2 Partnership Collaboration

Under the Policing and Crime Act 2017, blue light services were under a formal duty to collaborate to improve efficiency, effectiveness and deliver improved outcomes.

Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service (LFRS), Lancashire Constabulary and North West Ambulance Service had met at both tactical and strategic levels and had agreed and signed a strategic statement of intent which contained the following aims:

- **Improved Outcomes** – The collaboration maintains or improves the service we provide to local people and local communities;
- **Reduce Demand** – The collaboration should contribute towards our longer-term strategic objective of decreasing risk in communities and reducing demand on services;
- **Better Value for Money** – The collaboration produces quantifiable efficiencies either on implementation or in the longer term;
- **Reduced inequalities within our communities** – The collaboration contributes towards reducing inequalities wherever possible.

The report outlined the progress of major workstreams overseen in Lancashire by the Blue Light Collaboration Board (BLCB). These workstreams were managed through both Strategic and Tactical meetings, supporting improved outcomes, better value for money, reduced demand, and addressing inequalities in communities.

Leadership Development
Lancashire Fire and Rescue service (LFRS), Lancashire Police (LanCon), and North West Ambulance Service (NWAS) continued to seek efficiencies and foster professional relationships across Blue Light Services.

Following the success and positive feedback from the three leadership events held in 2025, one hosted by each blue light service, planning was underway for another series of events in 2026. It was proposed that they would follow a similar format, with each blue light service hosting one of the events.

The group was continuing to progress a cross-service coaching and mentoring network where people with similar roles at a comparable level were identified to link with each other in the role of either a coach or mentor. The events that ran in 2025 provided an opportunity for the attendees to be briefed on the benefits of that and indicate whether they would be willing to enter into a coaching or mentoring arrangement which received a positive response.

Health and Wellbeing

A new collaborative group was formed earlier in the year, bringing together Health and Wellbeing leads from all 3 Services. The group was led by LFRS, and its goal was to understand and align the health and wellbeing offerings across Blue Light's organisations, exploring joint opportunities to support staff. It was recognised that there were a number of similarities in the challenges faced by personnel across the 3 services, such as dealing with distressing incidents and shift work. By collaborating and sharing mechanisms to support staff, interventions could be optimised.

The group's initial step was to share policies and procedures for best practice and learning. Work planned for the group included continuing to develop the idea of a Tri-service wellbeing event for any member of blue light staff and continuing to explore the possibility of a joint blue light fitness and nutrition support offer. LFRS and LanCon were developing an online module for mental health awareness, to be available to all staff and shared more widely once completed.

Estates and Co-location

The estates and co-location initiative between LFRS, NWAS, and LanCon aimed to identify opportunities for shared sites enhancing collaboration and value for money. Successful co-location at Lancaster, St Annes, Darwen, Preston, and other Fire Stations had improved operational efficiency and fostered stronger inter-service relationships, ultimately benefiting Lancashire communities.

An updated Blue Light Collaboration Project Initiation Document had provided direction for the Estates and Co-location sub- group, which was exploring further collaboration. Quarterly meetings between Heads of Estates from LFRS, NWAS, and LanCon had shown that benefits extended beyond site sharing. The project's objectives, principles, and expected benefits had been updated. The group was also considering system knowledge exchange, shared procurement specifications, and joint supplier frameworks.

Fleet had now been added as part of that group and had started work to explore the opportunities around joint servicing of vehicles across the blue light services. The group were also assessing the viability of sharing the use of Vehicle Maintenance Unit (VMU) facilities in cases of high demand or business continuity. Work had already been carried out to reduce the number of Notices on Intended Prosecution (NIPs) sent to blue light partner agencies, where appropriate. Further workstreams would be identified as the group matured such as electric vehicles and supporting infrastructure, collisions, and driver management.

Community First Responder

A cost-benefit analysis by the New Economy showed that Emergency Medical Response (EMR) yielded a return of £4.41 for every £1 invested. In areas with EMR co-responding, firefighters were dispatched alongside ambulance services for suspected cardiac arrests, with the first to arrive providing life-saving care. The parallel response increased the likelihood of timely intervention. Whilst that model had been successful in parts of the UK, the steer was now to phase out EMR in favour of supporting the CFR volunteer Framework.

In Lancashire, the CFR workstream enabled LFRS staff volunteers to respond to

	life-threatening emergencies from their workplace. Since April 2025, nearly 2025, nearly 300 incidents had been attended by LFRS personnel acting within phases 1 and 2. • Phase 1: Green book staff respond voluntarily while on duty. • Phase 2: Flexi Duty Officers (FDOs) respond while on duty. • Phase 3: On Call staff respond within their communities. LFRS were currently at the point of developing Phase 3. Stations had been identified to align with NWAS data indicating greatest demand for CFR and where implementation of the scheme would maximise the positive impact. **Recruitment** Recruitment was the most recent subgroup to be set up and was still in its infancy. The group were looking at opportunities for joint recruitment initiatives, exploring ways to improve the vetting and references protocol, reviewing best practice for supporting applicants with neurodiverse conditions and consider cost saving collaboration through shared recruitment events and recruitment material. Councillor S Sidat asked whether the Fire Service would commence action without the police in a scenario where both services were requested through a 999 call. Acting Area Manager, Kirsty McCreesh advised that it would be dependent on the incident type. If it were a fire, the Service would begin immediately, however, in the event of other incidents, such as gaining entry, support may be required from the National Inter-Agency Liaison Officers (NILO) on duty to understand any risks posed to ensure the Service made informed decisions. **4.3 Overall User Satisfaction** People surveyed included those who had experienced an accidental dwelling fire, a commercial fire, or a special service incident that the Service attended. The standard was achieved if the percentage of satisfied responses was greater than the standard. Annual Standard: 97.50% In quarter 3, 76 people had been surveyed and the number satisfied with the service was 73. The running total number of people surveyed was 4,074 with 4,016 of those people being satisfied with the Service; 98.58% against a standard of 97.50%; a variance of 1.08%. The Chair thanked Officers for an excellent report and positive work. County Councillor J Tetlow moved to note and endorse the Quarter 3 Measuring Progress report; seconded by Councillor S Sidat. **Resolved: -** That the Performance Committee noted and endorsed the Quarter 3 Measuring Progress report, including two positive and one negative exception.
5-25/26	**Lithium Battery-related Fires**

	The paper supported the presentation to the Committee and provided an overview of lithium battery-related Accidental Dwelling Fires (ADFs) in Lancashire, including scale, trends, product types, locations, casualty impact, and the implications for prevention and risk management activity. Area Manager, Matt Hamer informed Members that the increasing prevalence of consumer products powered by lithium-ion batteries presented an emerging and distinct fire risk within domestic settings. Those products were widely used, frequently charged within living spaces, and were often associated with poor charging practices, battery degradation, or non-compliant devices. The presentation summarised Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service's (LFRS) analysis of lithium battery-related ADFs using enhances incident recording and retrospective data interrogation. A custom incident recording question set was introduced into the Incident Recording System (IRS) in June 2023 to improve identification of lithium battery-related fires. To ensure earlier incidents were captured, keyword searches of free-text fields were also applied, recognising that many lithium-powered products were described inconsistently (e.g. vapes, e-cigarettes, electronic cigarettes). The combined approach strengthened confidence that lithium battery-related incidents were being consistently identified across the dataset. Over the most recent three-year period, LFRS attended 93 lithium battery-related accidental dwelling fires. Incident levels had remained broadly static, averaging 31 incidents per year. During the same period, LFRS attended 2,123 accidental dwelling fires in total, meaning lithium battery-related fires accounted for 4.4% of all ADFs. In 58% of incidents (54 fires), the product involved was recorded generically as lithium-ion batteries, reflecting limitations in the information available at incident level. Other identified product types included: - E-Bikes, - E-Scooters, - E-appliance chargers, - E-cigarette and similar devices, - Portable electronic equipment. This indicated risk across a wide range of consumer products, not limited to any single category. The most common locations for fire ignition were: - Bedrooms – 23.7% (22 incidents), - Living rooms – 19.4% (18 incidents), - Kitchens – 16.1% (15 incidents). These findings demonstrated that lithium battery fires most frequently originated in occupied living and sleeping areas which increased the potential for life risk. In terms of Geographic Distribution, the three highest incident districts together accounted for 45.2% of all lithium battery-related ADFs.

There were 13 recorded casualties from 8 incidents:

- 61.5% (8) resulted in slight injuries,
- 23.1% (3) resulted in serious injuries,
- 15.4% (2) resulted in fatalities.

Although the overall number of incidents was relatively modest, the proportion of serious injury and fatal outcomes indicated that lithium battery fires could have severe consequences, particularly when fires developed rapidly in domestic settings.

Analysis highlighted several important risk characteristics:

- Lithium battery fires were consistently occurring year-on-year rather than emerging as a short-term spike.
- Incidents predominantly occurred in habitable rooms, increasing life risk.
- A wide range of everyday consumer products were involved, many of which were used and charged without formal safety oversight.

The findings reinforced the importance of:

- Targeted public safety messaging on safe charging, storage, and disposal of lithium battery products,
- Integration of lithium battery risk into home fire safety check advice and campaigns,
- Continued improvement in data quality and incident identification,
- Ongoing monitoring to identify any future growth linked to increased uptake of electric mobility and portable devices.

Additionally, Area Manager, Matt Hamer informed Members that from a regulatory perspective, a Private Member's Bill for lithium-ion battery safety had been put forward to the House of Lords and was currently its second reading.

The Chair queried whether the source of purchase for lithium-ion batteries impacted on the number of fires. Area Manager, Matt Hamer explained that the majority of fires related to the tampering and modifying of products, over charging or incorrect charging, and charging with damaged chargers. It was acknowledged that cost was an influential factor in the type of charger purchased, however, the Service encouraged the purchase of batteries with incorporated safety features. The Service worked closely with Trading Standards, gathering evidence, to assist in closing down opportunistic, unsafe, online sellers.

In response to a question from Councillor Sidat in relation to the work of Prevention regarding lithium-ion battery fires, Area Manager, Matt Hamer explained that the Service had developed a dedicated electrical safety campaign which was informed by the annual analysis of incident data and ran prior to times when incidents were most likely to occur. The campaign in the winter period comprised of heating safety messages with the charging safety campaign delivered in October/November, in advance of the purchase of electrical gifts at Christmas. In addition to working closely with Trading Standards, the Service also promoted national campaigns such as the 'Register my Appliance' campaign. It was noted by Members that learning taken from fatal incidents had informed subsequent education packages.

The Chair requested further information on mobile phone related bedroom fires.

	Area Manager, Matt Hamer highlighted that the fires were most likely to occur when batteries were damaged causing over-heating when charging which could result in thermal-runaway. High-quality products had in-built safety features and had battery-performance intelligence. Low-quality and modified products for phones posed a safety risk for a significant battery fire. County Councillor Tetlow referenced a fatal incident where an electric scooter ignited in a lift. Area Manager, Matt Hamer stated that the ignition of batteries did occur and was a recognised hazard. Some new buildings were designed with charging points on exit routes, and the Service were influencing design practice to ensure escape routes remained clear. In response to a query from Councillor S Sidat regarding safety provision in schools, Area Manager, Matt Hamer explained that with the increase of electronic device use within schools, a school education package had been developed for young people and also teachers, in relation to safe charging practices. During holiday periods, engagement would take place with schools to ensure safe shutdown procedures. Advice had also been requested from schools on fire risk assessments to include pupils travelling to school on e-scooters and bikes. The Chair requested a more detailed breakdown of lithium-ion battery related accidental dwelling fires in relation to districts. Area Manager, Matt Hamer advised that data would be broken down to wards in Lower Super Output areas to identify causes of fires and target specific risk. Details of the ward and causation for the high numbers of incidents could be provided to Members. County Councillor Aidy Riggott commented that, while the number of fires in some districts was proportionate to their population, there were instances where districts with lower populations recorded a surprisingly high number of fires. Area Manager, Phil Jones highlighted that many large districts had a high number of delivery drivers and individuals using modified e-bikes which posed safety risks, particularly whilst charging. Area Manager, Matt Hamer added that comparable district data would be provided for context. County Councillor J Tetlow remarked that more legislation was needed to regulate e-bikes and prevent modifications. As part of the Road Safety Partnership, the Service worked with the police who were aware that electric-powered two-wheeled vehicles were a significant issue. During Operation Centurion, the police had the power to seize illegal e-bikes, many of which had been modified. Due to the speed and noise of e-bikes, there was also a link to organised crime and anti-social behaviour. The Chair asked if regulated enforcement could be adopted and penalties imposed to deter for individuals from riding e-bikes without a licence. Area Manager, Matt Hamer stated that the police have enforcement powers to seize and crush vehicles. E-bike issues were reported back to the National Fire Chiefs Council as it was a high-profile topic. County Councillor A Riggott stated that if individuals were shown the end result of e-bikes and e-scooters that had been crushed, it could act as a deterrent. Area Manager, Matt Hamer replied that he could feed that back to the police. County Councillor A Riggott moved to note the report and presentation; seconded

	by Councillor J Tetlow. **Resolved: -** That the Performance Committee noted the report and presentation.
6-25/26	**Houses in Multiple Occupation**
	The report supported the presentation to Performance Committee and provided an overview of Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service's (LFRS) risk-based approach to managing the risk in Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs), including the scale of the risk, recent fire and enforcement data, emerging pressures, and the collaborative arrangements in place with Local Housing Authorities. Area Manager, Matt Hamer informed Members that HMOs represented a complex area of risk due to high occupancy levels, shared facilities, and often, the vulnerability of residents. While Local Housing Authorities (LHAs) were the lead regulator for most HMOs, LFRS retained responsibility under the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 for higher-risk and more complex premises, including taller buildings and mixed-use accommodation. Lancashire had over 68,000 regulated premises, with HMOs forming a significant and growing component of residential risk. The current three-year Risk Based Inspection Programme (RBIP) identified 5,085 high and very high-risk premises. A fully established Protection establishment (Level 4 competent staff) provided capacity for up to 3,000 audits per year. To maintain a three-year intervention cycle, the Service aimed to complete 1,500 high-risk audits per annum, prioritising premises that presented the greatest life risk. A HMO was defined as a property occupied by three or more tenants forming more than one household, sharing basic facilities. Larger HMOs were those with five or more tenants. Local Housing Authorities were the lead regulator for most HMOs, including licensed and unlicensed properties. LFRS acted as the enforcing authority for higher-risk premises, such as: - HMOs within mixed-use buildings, - Taller and more complex residential layouts, - Hostels, hotels, and accommodation managed by local authorities. The dual-regulatory framework required strong coordination to ensure that risk was effectively managed without duplication. Local authority data indicated several hundred known HMOs across Lancashire, with the majority being below three storeys, but a smaller number of 3-6 storey HMOs that presented elevated risk. Between 2021 and 2025, LFRS attended 125 primary fires in HMOs: - 63% occurred in licensed HMOs, - 33% where licensing status was unknown, - 4% in known unlicensed HMOs. Since 2021, LFRS had undertaken significant regulatory activity within HMOs, including audits, enforcement notices, alterations, and prohibitions. Enforcement action had been used proportionately to address serious deficiencies and manage risk where compliance could not be achieved through advice or informal measures.

Emerging risk pressures were:

- Rapid growth in small (3-4 person) HMOs that fell outside licensing schemes, reducing visibility and oversight.
- Increased investor ownership, often by individuals based outside the area, making engagement and compliance more challenging.
- Growing use of HMOs as supported accommodation, housing residents with increased vulnerability, which elevated life risk and complexity.

LFRS worked closely with all Lancashire Local Housing Authorities through:

- A formal Memorandum of Understanding (MoU),
- Selective licensing and joint initiatives targeting higher-risk HMOs and rogue landlords.
- Information sharing and coordinated enforcement activity,
- Attendance at pan-Lancashire housing leads forum,
- Continual safeguarding and signposting through prevention pathways (e.g. Home Fire Safety Check (HFSC) / Business Fire Safety Checks (BFSC),
- National Leadership on Improving premises risk data, including development of improved local data systems.

County Councillor A Riggott commented that only 6 Councils in Lancashire had issued an Article 4 Directive to remove permitted development rights for HMOs and some Councils were not exercising their regulatory powers.

The Chair asked if the severity of injuries of those involved in HMO fires was recorded as she believed it would be useful campaign material and encourage Councils to issue Article 4 Directives. Area Manager, Matt Hamer confirmed that the severity was recorded as slight, serious, or fatal.

Councillor S Sidat queried whether Councils could identify some unlicenced HMOs through the Housing benefits system based on addresses with multiple claimants. Area Manager, Matt Hamer advised that the matter was left to professional judgement. Due to personal circumstances, many tenants of unlicenced premises could be claimants of multiple benefits and some opportunistic landlords use an individual's vulnerabilities to increase rent charges.

In response to a question from Councillor Sidat regarding Homes of Multiple Occupation, Area Manager, Matt Hamer explained that if the residents were from the same family (immediate or extended), it would be classed as a single private dwelling. The perspective from the Fire Service would be prevention in the home. He advised that he would check the legislation with regards to classification and the number of family members in one household as there were grey areas in housing and planning legislation, and fire safety.

In response to a question from the Chair in relation to Air BnBs, Area Manager, Matt Hamer explained that the property was classified as a single private dwelling, however, when hosting paying guests, it should be treated as a small property for paying guests in accordance with guidance. The Air BnB website advised guests to provide their own smoke detection. Nationally, Fire Services had collaborated with the National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) and Air BnB to raise awareness of fire safety issues. It was acknowledged that once a paying guest was present, the property should fall under paying guest regulations, however, it would need to be

	enforced. Following a fire in a glamping pod, the Service worked with the NFCC to shape guidance around those types of dwellings. County Councillor highlighted a tax break that the government had introduced for renting additional rooms in homes, which could result in a growing number of HMOs. Area Manager, Matt Hamer advised that he would investigate it outside of the meeting. The Chair queried the number of unlicenced properties in relation to slavery. Area Manager, Matt Hamer explained that he would liaise with the Fire Safety Manager in Blackpool as there was an organised crime response which identified victims of modern slavery. County Councillor J Tetlow moved to note the report and presentation; seconded by Councillor S Sidat. **Resolved: -** That the Performance Committee noted the report and presentation.
7-25/26	**Flooding Incident Activity**
	The report as the same as that reported to the Performance Committee in December and summarised special service incidents related to flooding incidents recorded by Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service (LFRS), between 1 April 2014 and 31 March 2025. The Analysis covered flooding due to surface water, rising river levels, high tide, or reservoir, and the recorded causes (heavy rainfall, obstruction/blockage, structural failure). Incidents involving burst pipes etc., were excluded. Fiscal years were used to align with seasonal effects and included the most recent 2025 data. Area Manager, Phil Jones explained that there had been 881 flood related incidents over the ten-year period. Activity peaked in 2015/16 due to storm Desmond and Eva, both of which occurred in December 2015, with activity generally trending downward since then. The most recent year recorded 67 incidents, equating to 74.1% fewer incidents than the 259 recorded in 2015/16, and 31.5% fewer incidents than the ten-year average. Over the first half of the analysis period, activity typically followed an alternating peak and through pattern, however, activity over the most recent 2 years had been static. Overall, the winter months accounted for 41.7%, autumn 31.1%, summer 24.1%, with the lowest activity months being the spring season at 3.2%. However, incidents occurred most frequently in the individual months of December (26.1%) and November (18.8%), which combined, accounted for 44.9% of activity. Whilst the source of a flooding incident may have been due to surface water for example, the actual cause of the incident could be due to an event such as heavy rainfall, obstruction or blockage, or structural failure. For instance, the large-scale flooding seen in the village of St Michaels on Wyre during Storm Desmond in December 2015 was due to rising river levels and a structural failure i.e. embankment. Structural failure was a relatively rare event and accounted for just

1.1% of the 881 incidents. Overall, heavy rainfall accounted for 90.60% of the causes, with an obstruction or blockage accounting for just 7.5%. An obstruction or blockage could be caused by drainage issues (blocked roadside drains, culvert etc).

Over the last 10-year period, Lancaster district accounted for the largest number of flooding incidents, recording 190 (21.6% of the total). This was quite distantly followed by West Lancashire with 90 (10.2%) and 87 occurring in Wyre (9.9%). The top four districts Lancaster, West Lancashire, Wyre, and Rossendale accounted for almost 50% of the incidents. Lancaster districts accounted for the largest amount of surface water, rising river levels, and high tide incidents. The high tide incidents were mainly around the Glasson Docks area. There were five reservoir incidents within Chorley district which were from the area north of Anglezarke reservoir.

There were large variations of activity with each district between the years. Lancaster recorded almost 50% (93 incidents) of its activity in 2015/16, with another peak in 2017/18 accounting for an additional 32%. All districts but three had a decreasing trend, with only Blackburn with Darwen, Chorley, and Fylde recording a small increasing trend. During the most recent year, only West Lancashire had recorded a notably greater number of incidents with 17. These were almost exclusively heavy rainfall related.

Flooding events could quickly affect many properties over a wide area and in certain circumstances, spate conditions were declared. These conditions were when many calls were received simultaneously for incidents not at the same address. This meant that affected property counts could be recorded as estimates, or there was a single record for the original location/property, but the actual number affected was far greater. This could involve a large number of properties in which the counts were only captured within free text narrative. However, overall, there had been 8,708 recorded properties affected by flood water entry. This included three separate incidents in 2017/18 in which a count of 500 properties at each incident were recorded.

Spate conditions would affect the recording of casualties, rescues, and evacuations, as these could sometimes be estimates, especially when large numbers of people were not directly evacuated by the Fire Service. There was an incident type which might be used as an alternate to, but related to flooding, such as a rescue or evacuation from water. These were where people had been rescued/assisted by the Fire Service from a vehicle or a location/property surrounded by water. An example would be when a vehicle had entered floodwater and become stranded. Over the ten-year period, there had been 115 such rescues/evacuations.

Members were provided with a breakdown of the 881 flooding incidents by district and the Lower Super Output Area (LSOA) in which the incident was located.

In response to a query from the Chair as to whether flooded subways were included in the surface water statistics, Area Manager, Phil Jones confirmed that they were. He explained that the subways were mostly in Skelmersdale and the Service sometimes pumped them when flooded and informed the local authority.

	County Councillor Tetlow remarked that the country was not as proactive in response to flooding as some other countries. Area Manager, Phil Jones stated that a lot of flooding occurred in the autumn period when drains were blocked due to falling leaves which caused surface water and localised flooding. Despite financial pressures, local authorities had made improvements in the clearing of drains and gullies. County Councillor J Tetlow commented that new developments would add to flooding issues in the county by increasing surface water. The ACFO explained that the Chair of the Authority was working with Flooding Groups. Farmers were proactively undertaking natural interventions and initiatives to mitigate flooding, and that further measures were in progress, including the implementation of flood alleviation tunnels in urban areas. County Councillor J Tetlow moved to note the analysis of flood-related demand and the continued importance of effective planning, preparedness, and response to severe weather events impacting on communities; seconded by Councillor S Sidat. **Resolved :-** That the Performance Committee noted the analysis of flood-related demand and the continued importance of effective planning, preparedness, and response to severe weather events impacting on communities.
8-25/26	**Dynamic Resource Management**
	The report and the attached six-month evaluation of Dynamic Resource Management (DRM) focused on its application, frequency, and effects across operational and financial areas. Also provided, was a review of the impact of DRM on response standards, availability, prevention and prevention activities, and impacts on mobilisations. Members were provided with assurance that the DRM had provided the required efficiency savings whilst maintaining excellent operational response performance within the standards set by the Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) over the first six months of implementation. Area Manager, Tom Powell informed Members that Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service (LFRS) had robust systems in place to monitor, manage, and dynamically deploy fire engines and firefighters to respond to emergencies across Lancashire. There were 58 fire engines and a number of specialist appliances in the county, however some were 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 had introduced smarter and more efficient deployment of firefighters based on county-wide risk and was used for advance planning. There were 39 fire stations across Lancashire: 22 of these had at least one wholetime crewed fire engine and 17 had at least one on-call fire engine. Additional wholetime, day-crewed or on-call fire engines were also available at some of those stations which meant they had two fire engines. There were four fire stations with two wholetime crewed fire engines in the county: Blackburn, Blackpool, Burnley, and Preston. All four also had other fire stations

close by, with additional fire engines ready to respond. Previous policy was that when one of the two fire engines at the 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 (this was called detached duties), or on overtime once detached duty options had been exhausted.

On 1 July 2025, the Service changed this approach to ensure sufficient resources were 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 had two wholetime fire engines could be detached, making the second engine temporarily unavailable, to maintain availability of a first fire engine somewhere else in the county. This was a methodical and strategic decision that ensure that the Service maintained 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. The Service ensured a fire engine was available at every wholetime station in the county as a minimum. Detachments were always used where possible before overtime, although overtime was still required on some occasions.

Following an initial three-month evaluation, LFRS had undertaken a six-month evaluation of DRM, with the full evaluation in Appendix 1. Over the first six months (1 July – 31 December 2025), DRM had been used a total of 208 times in quarters 2 and 3 (Q2 and Q3) which represented that DRM had been enacted 14% of available shifts across the four stations.

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

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

The average number of Wholetime fire engines available had reduced by one in the six months since DRM was introduced, however this had been offset by an increase in On-Call fire engine availability over the same period. Combined availability had resulted in LFRS maintaining an average of 48 fire engines available at any one time since 1 July 2025, which was 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 bill was £596,270, this equated to a saving of £549,085. This figure included on-costs (such as national insurance) and was for overtime shifts directly related to maintaining fire engine availability. To enable direct comparison, one pay figure had been used (2025), therefore the 2024 cost would 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 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 occurred had experienced a similar drop in Business Fire Safety Check (BFSC) numbers (14%) and Home Fire Safety Check (HFSC) numbers (16%).

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

In response to a question from the Chair regarding firefighters' perception of the overtime reduction, Area Manager, Tom Powell stated that the response had been mixed. Overtime had never been guaranteed, however, there had been a significant reduction which had affected those firefighters that had frequently chosen to undertake overtime. Although there had been a shift in the level of overtime, firefighters understood the need for the Service to make efficiencies. The ACFO further advised that, from a national and HMICFRS perspective, there was an expectation that Fire and Rescue Services should utilise their resources more effectively.

County Councillor J Tetlow asked how Wholetime and On-Call crews operated within a station and whether this had been taken into account regarding the DRM and potential cost savings. Area Manager, Tom Powell explained that the data Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP) was being refreshed in the current year, alongside an additional Service Review that considered emergency cover arrangements in relation to risk, demand, resources, and placement. Duty systems would also be reviewed with each presenting its own challenges.

Councillor S Sidat left the meeting at 12.03pm.

County Councillor A Riggott commented that the outcomes were excellent, though

	he stressed the importance of monitoring the HFSCs and BFSCs and for the Service's and national targets to be met whilst balancing what was realistically achievable. The ACFO responded that targets to be met and measurement against those were regularly discussed, deploying staff effectively across high-risk, commercial and prevention activity. Ongoing work was taking place to develop an evidence-based approach to identifying and targeting high-risk individuals and premises to ensure that activity was based on risk rather than volume. Going forward, evidence used would align resources to identified risks with crews identifying low level risk which could be elevated to high-risk where required. The importance of meeting targets was emphasised using an evidence-based framework with updates brought back to the Committee in due course. The priority was to ensure that the right people with the right skills were deployed effectively. Area Manager, Matt Hamer added that aspirational targets aided the Service in maximising potential and reiterated the importance of the right intervention, with the right person and the right place. Operational crews helped with capacity to ensure and business fire safety, and the community safety staff focused their expertise on high-risk individuals. A paper detailing a targeted approach would be presented to Members in summer/autumn. County Councillor a Riggott moved to note the report and evaluation; seconded by County Councillor S Asghar. **Resolved: -** That the Performance Committee noted the report and evaluation.
9-25/26	**Date of Next Meeting**
	The next meeting of the Committee would be held on 08 July 2026 at 1000 hours in the Main Conference Room at Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service Headquarters, Fulwood. Further meeting dates were noted for 15 September 2026 and agreed for 09 December 2026.

M Nolan
Clerk to CFA

LFRS HQ
Fulwood