

Lancashire Combined Fire Authority

Meeting to be held on 27 April 2026.

Fire Protection Report

Contact for further information: Deputy Chief Fire Officer Steve Healey
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Executive Summary

This report summarises Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service (LFRS) prosecutions pertaining to fire safety offences, in addition to convictions resulting from arson incidents which have been progressed via the criminal justice process.

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

Recommendation

The Authority is asked to note the report.

Fire Safety Convictions

Prosecutions

There have been no sentencings since the previous Combined Fire Authority report dated the 16 February 2026.

Prosecutions in the Court system

Five cases currently sit within the court system.

The responsible person and company for two houses in multiple occupation, in Bacup and Darwen pleaded guilty to breaches of the Fire Safety Order on 13 August 2025 at Preston Magistrates Court. The original sentencing hearing Court date was adjourned on 7 January 2026, with sentencing now set for 16 April 2026 at Preston Crown Court.

An NHS Trust and maintenance company appeared at Blackburn Magistrates Court on 1 October 2025, this case is related to a fatal fire and breaches of the Fire Safety Order in late 2023. This hearing was adjourned until 18 November 2025 at Preston Magistrates Court, then passed up to Preston Crown Court. The initial plea and case management hearing was heard on 15 December 2025; no pleas were given. A further plea and case management hearing will be heard at Preston Crown Court on 22 April 2026.

The responsible persons and a company were to appear at Blackburn Magistrates Court on 18 February 2026 for breaches of the Fire Safety Order for a Nightclub. The defendants did not appear at Court, but subsequently attended Lancaster Magistrates Court on 26 March 2026. At this hearing the defendants gave the following submissions, one responsible person pleaded guilty to all charges. The other responsible person and company pleaded not guilty. This case has been sent to Preston Crown Court with a hearing date of 23 April 2026.

Two companies and a charity were to appear at Blackburn Magistrates Court on 28 January 2026. This related to breaches of the Fire Safety Order for a mixed commercial and residential use student accommodation in Preston. This case was subsequently sent to Preston Crown Court after no pleas were given at Magistrates Court. The hearing at Preston Crown Court was heard on 6 March 2026 where no plea indications were given. A further hearing will be held on 3 July 2026 at Preston Crown Court.

Prosecution cases currently being developed and reviewed

Protection teams continue to investigate and build case files in relation to fourteen other premises where offences are believed to have been committed under the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005, which include the following:

- Care and nursing home x 3
- House in multiple occupation x 1
- Residential flats x 2
- Mixed commercial and residential x 1
- Commercial premises (shop) x 1
- Commercial but not residential (used for sleeping) x 1
- Large nightclub x 1
- Large theatre and bar x 1
- Hotel x 2
- Supported living x 1

Arson Risk Reduction

R v Fakhru Islam

Address – Breck Road, Poulton Le Fylde, FY6 7AA

Date and Time of Call – 08/12/2024, 04:02

This incident involved a deliberate fire at an Indian restaurant. Three fire appliances were mobilised to the address. On arrival crews were confronted with a severe fire at the front of the restaurant with flames issuing from the front window and door. The restaurant was closed and unoccupied at the time of the fire. A flat was located above the restaurant and several residents were evacuated. The fire caused severe damage to the front area of the restaurant, and the remainder of the restaurant was severely damaged by smoke. Evidence of an ignitable liquid was discovered during the investigation.

The defendant pleaded guilty to 'Arson reckless as to whether life endangered' and was sentenced to 7 years and 6 months imprisonment.

R v Shane Haigh

Address – Queens Promenade, Blackpool, FY2 9AB

Date and Time of Call – 15/09/2025, 21:48

This incident involved the attempted ignition of combustible items that had been placed in the oven. Prior to fire service arrival a support worker who was at the premises at the time of the incident evacuated the entire building, which comprised of several flats over four floors.

The defendant pleaded guilty to 'Arson reckless as to whether life endangered' and received a 12-month community order with 15 days rehabilitation activity requirement.

R v Jake Carr

Address – Tag Croft, Preston, PR2 7AQ

Date and Time of Call – 08/09/2025, 18:28

This incident involved the deliberate ignition of combustible items placed on a kitchen worktop directly below a gas boiler. Evidence of a second seat of fire was discovered in the gas meter cupboard. The property comprised of a first floor flat. The fire caused severe damage to the kitchen and contents and moderate damage by smoke to the remainder of the flat. The defendant, who was the sole occupier of the flat, was arrested at the scene.

The defendant pleaded guilty to 'Arson reckless as to whether life endangered' and was sentenced to 6 years imprisonment.

Arson Sentencing Guidelines

The maximum sentence for arson in the UK is life imprisonment, as it's considered an exceptionally dangerous offence under the Criminal Damage Act 1971. While life imprisonment is the potential maximum, actual sentences vary significantly based on intent, harm caused (such as endangering life), and specific circumstances, with ranges from discharges or fines for minor incidents to many years in custody for severe cases.

There are currently another 10 arson cases ongoing within the criminal justice system.

Business risk

Moderate – Members are made aware of prosecutions related to fire safety activity and arson within Lancashire, to satisfy themselves that the required robust approach is being pursued.

Sustainability or Environmental Impact

None.

Equality and Diversity Implications

None.

Data Protection (GDPR)

Will the proposal(s) involve the processing of personal data?

No.

HR implications

None.

Financial implications

None.

Legal implications

Failure of Responsible Persons to meet new legislative requirements placed upon them, may result in LFRS undertaking additional prosecution cases in future.

Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985**List of background papers**

Paper:

Date:

Contact:

Reason for inclusion in Part 2 if appropriate: Insert Exemption Clause