

COUNCIL APPOINTED COMBINED FIRE AUTHORITY REPRESENTATIVE - REPORT TO THE COUNCIL – COUNCILLORS JACKSON, MATTHEWS AND T WILLIAMS

This report updates the Council on the work of the Combined Fire Authority. The Fire Authority is made up of 25 Councillors (19 representatives from Lancashire County Council three from Blackburn and Darwen Council and three from Blackpool Council).

Since the last report to Council, the Combined Fire Authority has met on two occasions 25 April and 20 June 2016. The Combined Fire Authority has produced a summary of those meetings and the appointed representatives will update the Council on any issues.

REPORT OF THE LANCASHIRE COMBINED FIRE AUTHORITY (CFA)
25 APRIL 2016

1. ANNUAL SERVICE PLAN

Members received a presentation by AM Cox on the Annual Service Plan, which linked through to the Integrated Risk Management Plan and our aim of making Lancashire safer. The Annual Plan had been designed primarily to inform staff of what Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service's (LFRS) key projects and focus would be in the following 12 months, copies of which were made available to Members.

The Plan was structured around four Key Priorities:

1. Preventing and Protecting – preventing fires and emergencies happening and minimising their impact on life and property when they do. Prevention and protection services are tailored to the important stages in life, to help people start safe, live safe and age safe. Prevention and protection activities are themed around home safety; business safety; road safety and working with children and young people. The Plan highlighted the development of better data sharing; direct marketing campaigns to use the data collected from the Home Fire Safety process to target communications; support to business in fire safety and business continuity; strategic partnerships and a new type of intervention that would address a broader range of safety and wellbeing issues.
2. Responding – delivering operational excellence. Responding quickly, with the right training, right information and equipment to deal with the incident effectively and safely. Planning and preparing for emergencies locally and nationally, often with other organisations and emergency services. Activities highlighted were the delivery of a new Day Crewing Plus station at Skelmersdale, the replacement of the radio system with the national Emergency Services Mobile Communication Project, the trial of a water tower vehicle, the evaluation of the pilot first responder scheme with North West Ambulance Service (NWAS), the delivery of a new Community Fire Station in Lancaster in partnership with NWAS, the pilot the use of volunteers and development activities to strengthen, support and improve the Retained Duty System.

3. Engaging with Our Staff – investing in creating the best working environment, with safe systems of work, training and personal protective equipment. The Plan highlighted the recruitment of whole-time firefighters; the delivery of a formal coaching and mentoring programme; delivery of information, facilities and support to improve fitness, health and wellbeing and a review of how staff and organisational achievements are rewarded.
4. Delivering Value for Money – managing funding reductions systematically to provide an affordable, value for money service. The Plan highlighted the introduction of a new maintenance of skills system, further development on the use of tablets and the geographical information system, a single location to centralise equipment and breathing maintenance, developing the concept of area training hubs, reviewing how information is used, stored and shared and reviewing for further development of delivering services to the public digitally using web technology.

The Plan focussed on consolidation; building on the past to strengthen the future and make Lancashire safer.

2. MEMBER CHAMPION ACTIVITY

Member Champions presented their reports to the Authority for the period up to March 2016 and the following key points were noted:

Equality and Diversity

The Champion for Equality and Diversity, Councillor Aldridge presented the report. Community engagement with the people of Lancashire continued to provide positive evidence of effective processes being in place and the activity was mainstreamed. Internally, the Service continued to review its Human Resources practices and communications and was establishing revised mechanisms. The Director of People and Development was a representative of the Local Government Association on the Joint National Joint Council working party for the “Inclusive Fire Service” initiative, whilst within the Service, consideration was being given to engagement in positive action in advance of the forthcoming external recruitment campaigns – experience had previously shown that a long lead-in was required to have any beneficial effect.

Older People

The Older Person’s Member Champion, County Councillor Perks had actively worked across all Service Delivery areas. The Keep Safe and Warm initiative continued to be promoted actively across all areas. The Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH), of which Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service was an active partner, continued to concentrate efforts on referrals for older vulnerable members of our community.

The approach to delivering prevention and protection services was framed around an inner core made up of three interlocking components; Stay Safe; Live Safe and Age Safe. Partners included Lancashire Constabulary, Adult Social Care, Health, Mental Social Services and others had been asked to screen any cases that they were involved with and to provide suitable referrals to LFRS.

During the three months since the last Member Champions' report a total of 58 high quality referrals had been received (via the MASH) for vulnerable older people over the age of 60 where positive interventions had resulted.

County Councillor Perks reported that since the last meeting he had attended a further Lancashire Older Person's Champion Network Event where the Authority's Community Fire Safety Reports were circulated to all partners to highlight the good work done in Lancashire.

Members noted that County Councillor Perks had been filmed at Chorley Fire Station to show "A Day in the Life of a County Councillor". The film had been commissioned by the Local Government Association to show to prospective County Councillors the diversity of the role.

Road Safety

Councillor Jackson continued to support Safe Drive Stay Alive programme. Since the last report, the Safe Drive Stay Alive Multi-agency Road Safety Team had delivered the presentation to another 2,200 students making a total of 4,420 students who had received this programme since November 2015.

Councillor Jackson continued to support Wasted Lives, which was now embedded into the work LFRS carry out on a daily basis. This education programme had now been delivered to approximately 60,000 young people throughout Lancashire, Blackpool and Blackburn with Darwen.

The new initiative, Childsafe Plus was supported by Councillor Jackson as it continued to be rolled out to Year 6 students in all Lancashire primary schools, prior to transition to High School. This age group were vulnerable due to being a pedestrian or a cyclist, which the classroom educational programme focused on in an attempt to reduce those killed or seriously injured within this particular age group.

A request from the Driving Vehicle Standards Agency (DVLA) had been received about the possibility of the DVLA utilising some Fire Stations within Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service. The Fire Stations would be used as testing centres to enable them to offer additional localised test centres. This was work in progress and a meeting was being organised to move this forward.

Environment

The Champion for the Environment, Councillor Brown presented the report. New waste bins separating general and recycling waste had been rolled out across the Service to provide a generic system for the management of waste. Early indications showed that the amount of waste recycled as a proportion of the total waste was progressively increasing. Total waste was starting to reduce and further ways of reducing waste at source were being explored but if waste was produced then if this could be recycled this would be the preferred option.

3. FIRE RELATED PROSECUTIONS

A report detailing prosecutions in respect of fire safety management failures and arson related incidents within the period 1 January 2016 to 31 March 2016 was endorsed by Members. There were no completed prosecution cases reported although Members noted there were seven further fire safety cases/ investigations ongoing.

Fire protection and business support information provided included use of the simple caution procedure at a house of multiple occupancy in St Annes and details of an internal seminar delivered to Fire Safety Officers regarding the implementation of the functional structure for Protection.

In addition, five arson convictions were reported including a notable incident that demonstrated the benefit of an Arson Threat Home Fire Safety Check which had been delivered by the Service and which had contributed to the safe escape of the occupants of the premises.

4. COMMUNITY FIRE SAFETY REPORTS

This report included information for the two Unitary and 12 District Authorities relating to Fire Safety initiatives and Fires and Incidents of particular interest.

As part of this report Members received a presentation by Station Manager J Williams entitled "Who We Are and What We Do".

LFRS had designed a video for use across Lancashire that showed 'who we are and what we do'. The video had been used in Blackburn with Darwen to support the delivery of a six-week training course to children in Year 5 at school. Following a successful trial, the course was now being piloted to three more schools. Training resources were pre-prepared and made available electronically which negated the need for LFRS personnel to attend the schools to deliver personally the training and thereby saved costs. During the third week of the course, pupils viewed the video and similar videos from North West Ambulance Service and the Lancashire Constabulary. Any questions raised at the end of the course were added to an ongoing bank of questions with answers available electronically. The video is available by following the link: <https://vimeo.com/158312740>. Members undertook to consider extending this project to schools in other parts of the County.

REPORT OF THE LANCASHIRE COMBINED FIRE AUTHORITY (CFA) 20 JUNE 2016

1. COMBINED FIRE AUTHORITY ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING (AGM)

The meeting held 20 June was the Authority's AGM and Members appointed County Councillors F De Molfetta and M Parkinson as Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Authority respectively for 2016/ 2017.

2. WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS

The Chairman welcomed new Members, County Councillors Vivien Taylor and Ron Shewan from Lancashire County Council. He thanked the continuing Members for their contributions to the work of the Authority over the previous year and looked forward to another successful year working together for Lancashire residents.

3. SAFETY, HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENT ANNUAL REVIEW

The Authority considered the Safety, Health and Environment Annual Review Report for Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service covering the period 1 April 2015 to 31 March 2016. As the body with ultimate responsibility for staff health, safety and environmental compliance, it is important that all CFA Members are aware of performance in this respect. The report therefore provided a summary of key actions, overall progress and outturn performance in respect of accidents and near misses and carbon emissions, together with a look forward.

The report summarised the arrangements in place to deliver the Service's Health and Safety Policy and provided a summary of health, safety and environment performance data. It included the reporting on occupational safety, health and environmental issues that had arisen during the period 1 April 2015 to 31 March 2016.

The Director of People and Development was pleased to report that the Service had again seen a very positive year in terms of overall safety, health and environment performance. The number of accidents to LFRS staff was the second lowest on record with 60 events being reported of which only 23 resulted in lost time accidents. LFRS continued to deliver projects to reduce its carbon emissions. The health and safety and environment management systems would continue to be developed and this was supported by external reviews that advocated robust policies, systems and a positive culture were in place within the Service.

4. FIRE PROTECTION REPORTS

A report detailing prosecutions in respect of fire safety management failures and arson related incidents within the period 1 April 2016 to 31 May 2016 was provided. At the request of County Councillor O'Toole, Group Manager Tony Crook presented Members with an overview of the work undertaken in respect of rented accommodation. This set out the various types of premises, the lead organisation responsible for inspection and enforcement action, the legislative framework, reasons for and types of inspection, actions undertaken to reduce risk and a summary of two prosecution examples.

5. COMMUNITY FIRE SAFETY REPORTS

This report included information for the two Unitary and 12 District Authorities relating to Community Fire Safety Initiatives and Fires and Incidents of particular interest.

As part of the report, Area Manager Simon Fryer gave a presentation to Members on the different operational strategies taken for recent waste fires at Fleetwood and Walton Summit to provide Members with an insight into the dilemmas faced by the Service.