

COUNCIL APPOINTED COMBINED FIRE AUTHORITY REPRESENTATIVE - REPORT TO THE COUNCIL – COUNCILLORS JACKSON, D COLEMAN 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 three occasions 18 September, 18 December 2017 and 19 February 2018. 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)
18 SEPTEMBER 2017

1. GRENFELL TOWER FIRE TRAGEDY IN LONDON – HIGH RISE BUILDINGS IN LANCASHIRE UPDATE

Members received an update report from Group Manager Tony Crook on the Grenfell Tower Fire investigation process and the actions being undertaken to reassure the public in Lancashire. The Grenfell Tower Fire occurred on 14 June 2017 at the 24-storey tower block. It caused at least 80 deaths and over 70 injuries. A definitive death toll was not expected until at least 2018. Sadly, this was the biggest loss of life from fire in the UK in a generation.

GM Crook advised that the Public Inquiry had opened on 14 September 2017. Police and Fire services believed that the fire had started accidentally in a fridge-freezer on the fourth floor. The rapid growth of the fire was thought to have increased by the building's exterior cladding, which was of a common type in widespread use. An independent review of building regulations and fire safety had been launched. The National Fire Chiefs Council was co-ordinating a Fire and Rescue Services' inspection of high rise premises and the Building Research Establishment were testing all ACM (aluminium composite) cladding material. The National Fire Chiefs Council had put forward a submission to the Inquiry, outlining what it thought should be included in the terms of reference to help shape the Inquiry.

The Authority was pleased to note that at the Lancashire County Council's full Council meeting held on 20 July 2017, a resolution was unanimously approved that called for the Government to legislate for the retro-fitting of sprinklers into residential high-rise buildings. This should be called the Grenfell Act in memory of many lives lost in the disaster and it resolved to install sprinklers in all new Lancashire County Council schools and major school extensions.

GM Crook advised that the Service had carried out inspections. 100% of 'Residential high rise' buildings, 72 had been inspected and other buildings were being inspected on a risk-based approach. It was noted that no school fell into the category of 18 metres or more. The findings from the inspections would be reviewed to inform our risk based inspection

programme for 2018/ 2019, along with the recommendations from the Public Inquiry and potential future governmental changes to fire safety standards.

2. FIRE PROTECTION REPORTS

Members received a report that detailed prosecutions in respect of fire safety management failures and arson related incidents within the period 1 June 2017 to 1 September 2017. In addition, Fire Protection and Business Support Information were included in the report, which included an update on the Primary Authority Scheme and business Safety Advisor activity.

In response to Member questions, it was confirmed that the Service looked at trends in relation to arson incidents, which occurred across the county. In addition, it was noted that the Service was currently running a number of pilots for the training and education of young people in Year 7 at school, which included anti-social behaviour and deliberate fire setting. A new training education programme was planned for delivery to all Year 7 pupils across Lancashire in 2018.

3. COMMUNITY FIRE SAFETY REPORTS

As part of the report, Members received a presentation by Area Manager Simon Fryer on the Service's response to a Pylon Rescue at Howick Cross.

AM Fryer advised that the call was received at 15:03 on 7 August 2017, reporting that a man, alive, but incapacitated was trapped at a height of 20 metres above the ground hanging upside down from an electricity pylon.

The Air Support Unit was requested and Fire crews from Penwortham, Fulwood, Hyndburn and 'Rope Rescue' colleagues from St Annes and Urban Search and Rescue were assigned. The utility company shut off the electricity to the pylon and members of the Rope Rescue Team ascended the pylon, initially securing the casualty to prevent him falling, then they administered medication provided by medical personnel at the scene.

Agencies in attendance were Lancashire Constabulary, North West Ambulance Service (NWAS), NWAS HART, Millers Recovery and the National Grid. The casualty had climbed the side of the pylon, which had been electrically isolated for maintenance purposes. The hem of his jeans had caught on a pylon nut, which had prevented his fall. At 6.36pm, the casualty was rescued. The Rope Rescue personnel then transferred him to a stretcher on Hyndburn's Aerial Ladder Platform, lowered to the ground and attended to by paramedics.

In response to Members that staff be acknowledged for their dedication, professionalism and bravery the Chief Fire Officer confirmed that the process to recognise staff who had undertaken such difficult deeds was the Chief Fire Officer Commendation Award.

REPORT OF THE LANCASHIRE COMBINED FIRE AUTHORITY (CFA)
18 DECEMBER 2017

1. CAPITAL AND REVENUE BUDGETS 2018/ 2019 – 2022/ 2023

The Authority noted the draft Capital Programme and Revenue Budget for 2018/ 2019 - 2022/ 2023.

The Authority authorised consultation with representatives of non-domestic ratepayers and Trade Unions on the budget proposals and agreed to give further consideration to both at the Budget Fixing Meeting scheduled for 19 February 2018.

2. CORPORATE SAFETY, HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENT POLICY

Under Section 2(3) of the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, employers must prepare and where necessary revise a written statement of health and safety policy. The existing safety, health and environment policy document, which was last considered by the Authority in September 2016, had been recently reviewed and amended as required. As the health and safety and environment functions were managed in a similar way it was considered appropriate for the Authority to declare its intent for both health and safety and the environment in the same document, which was endorsed at the meeting.

3. CONSULTATION ON PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO FRA COMBINATION SCHEME ORDER

The Government had commenced a consultation to vary combination schemes of Combined Fire and Rescue Authorities to enable the application of the 'representation model' (referred to in the Policing and Crime Act 2017). This would enable Combined Fire and Rescue Authorities to appoint Police and Crime Commissioners to be represented with voting rights, where the Authority had agreed to a request by the Police and Crime Commissioner. Members expressed different views, some were concerned that the Government's intention to enable further integration allowed for the potential takeover by the Police and Crime Commissioner when the Authority, which was a democratic body, was already working well for the benefit of the people of Lancashire. This would enable the Police and Crime Commissioner to have a vote, which would affect the political balance of the Authority. Conversely, some Members thought it would be a positive opportunity for the Police and Crime Commissioner to attend Authority meetings to gain a better understanding of the work of the Fire Authority and evidence the level of collaboration particularly for the Inspection by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services next year. Members voted and the Authority agreed for the Clerk and Monitoring Officer to respond with a yes, to agree with the proposed amendments to vary the combination schemes for Fire and Rescue Authorities in order to implement the 'representation model'.

**REPORT OF THE LANCASHIRE COMBINED FIRE AUTHORITY
19TH FEBRUARY 2018**

1. UK EMERGENCY MEDICAL TEAM DEPLOYMENT TO BANGLADESH – 17 DECEMBER 2017 – 3 FEBRUARY 2018

The Authority received a presentation from Graham Mossop, Watch Manager who attended the meeting to update Members on the recent deployment of the UK Emergency Medical Team (UK EMT) to Bangladesh. The UK EMT was a collaborative between the Department for International Development, NHS / Public Health England, UK Med, Handicap International and UK the UK International Search and Rescue Team (ISAR). He explained that (UK ISAR) was a co-operative of Fire and Rescue Services formed over 25 years ago who responded to humanitarian disasters and emergencies and provided capacity building across the world.

On 17 December 2017, a team was mobilised to Bangladesh to carry out a Medical Needs Assessment, which resulted in the mobilisation of the UKEMT on 24 December 2017. The mobilisation was to support the rise in Diphtheria cases in the refugee Rohingya community and due to in-country medics being diverted to treat patients. The World Health Organisation had requested assistance to further assist UNICEF with a vaccination campaign aimed at vaccinating children between the ages of 6 weeks – 15 years old. Difficulties included travel distances to reach patients as these could be as long as two hours each way, procurement of items in the bazaars, waste management, water sanitation and hygiene (WaSH).

WM Mossop assessed the infrastructure and the treatment centres and highlighted both good and bad practices in relation to WaSH, he liaised with infection control practitioners, generated standard operating procedures and promoted WaSH in line with international operating standards. A simple four-bin system was introduced to segregate at the point of use, clinical waste, non-clinical waste, sharps and glass. Chlorination of water was addressed with a simpler system using aqua tabs being adopted in the health/ diphtheria antitoxin (DAT) centres. Fire Safety training was given to the Rohingya security guards at all the centres in relation to raising the alarm, evacuation procedures and the use of fire extinguishers. Training of local clinicians took place, which was designed to enable them to continue DAT and associated medical treatments.

The positive outcomes were that the UK EMT triaged over 3,000 refugees with over 500 being treated for diphtheria, 5,100 refugees across all areas were treated with DAT, antibiotics were provided for mumps and tonsillitis, the UK government donated approximately £2m towards the cost of the massive vaccination programme and over £59m in total to the crisis, clinical skills of local medical staff were improved and the infrastructure and procedures in relation to WaSH were improved across all sites. A total of 350,000 children had been vaccinated in the district in addition to 130,000 local Bangladesh children who lived in close proximity.

2. LOCAL GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION FIRE VISION 2024

The Authority noted that each year at its annual conference, the Local Government Association (LGA) released a conference document, which focussed on the current and future challenges of the Fire and Rescue Sector from the LGA Fire perspective. This year the document was entitled “What will 21st Century Fire and Rescue Services Look Like in 2024?”

Members considered the document that set out its mission, vision and rational for change as well as presenting some ambitions and actions.

3. NATIONAL FRAMEWORK CONSULTATION

The Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004 required the Secretary of State to prepare a National Framework for fire and rescue authorities to keep it under review. The Authority noted that the National Framework was last published in 2012 and that the Minister for Policing and the Fire Service, the Rt Hon Nick Hurd MP was consulting on changes cited as needed to embed the fire reform programme and provisions in the Policing and Crime Act 2017. The Home Office 'Fire and Rescue National Framework for England' consultation document was considered and the Chairman's response noted.

4. HER MAJESTY'S INSPECTORATE OF CONSTABULARY AND FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICES (HMICFRS) – PROGRESS TOWARDS INSPECTION – BRIEFING

The Policing and Crime Act 2017 set out that Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary, Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) would inspect and report on the efficiency and effectiveness of fire and rescue authorities in England. In July 2017, HMICFRS extended its remit to include inspections of England's Fire and Rescue Services. This would assess and report on the efficiency, effectiveness and people of the 45 Fire and Rescue Services in England: -

- Effectiveness: how effective is the FRS at keeping people safe and secure from fire and other risks?
- Efficiency: how efficient is the FRS at keeping people safe and secure from fire and other risks?
- People: how well does the FRS look after its people?

The HMICFRS' inspection programme for Fire and Rescue Authorities in England was subject to the approval of the Home Secretary and the consultation to HMICFRS' inspection methodology closed on the 19th February 2018. It was noted that HMICFRS could also undertake further inspections at any time. The inspection would be developed with the fire and rescue service and would be designed to promote improvement and to identify all aspects of the excellent work undertaken. The Authority noted there would be 3 tranches of inspection, with Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service being inspected in the first tranche during summer 2018.

An Audit Assurance Team led by Area Manager Tony Crook had been established. The team was responsible for the Service response to the inspection and would support HMICFRS in the audit and assessment of performance against the Inspection Criteria, overseeing the coordination, analysis and presentation of information to HMICFRS, Service Management Team and the Combined Fire Authority, acting as a key point of contact for LFRS with the inspectorate throughout the entire inspection process and keeping staff informed and updated.

5. REVENUE BUDGET 2018/2019 - 2022/2023

The Authority considered a report of the Treasurer that presented a gross revenue budget requirement for 2018/2019 of £55.1m. This allowed for the increase in pay costs arising from

forecast pay awards of 2.0%, additional posts required to meet increased demands and further investment in apprentices, all of which was partly offset by the identification of £0.8m of efficiency savings.

The final Local Government Finance Settlement confirmed funding was in line with the draft figures presented in December, i.e. £24.3m a reduction of £1.0m (4.0%), and that the council tax referendum level was increased to 3.0%.

The Authority considered council tax options for 2018/2019, which met the requirements to deliver a balanced budget and maintain an adequate level of reserves and determined a 2.99% increase (£1.96 per annum, less than 4p per week) per Band D property. In order to deliver this an unidentified savings target of £0.3m was included in the budget.

The Authority was faced with a growing funding gap in future years, the extent of which was considered as set out in the report, however it was noted that 2019/2020 was the final year of the current four-year settlement and hence funding in future years was uncertain. Currently the Authority remained in a good financial position with reserves able to offset the financial challenges throughout the remainder of the four-year settlement. The position became more challenging thereafter, by which time the Authority should have greater certainty on future funding, pay awards and future referendum limits.