

COUNCIL APPOINTED COMBINED FIRE AUTHORITY REPRESENTATIVES - REPORT TO THE COUNCIL – COUNCILLORS BAKER, HUGO AND JACKSON

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 with Darwen Council and three from Blackpool Council).

Since the last report to Council, the Combined Fire Authority has met on three occasions, 20 February, 24 April and 26 June 2023. 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 20 FEBRUARY 2023

1. Chairman's welcome and introduction

On behalf of the Authority, the Chairman acknowledged the bravery and commitment of Lancashire Firefighters who were amongst those deployed to Turkey as part of the UK's International Search and Rescue Team following the recent earthquakes in Southern Turkey and neighbouring Syria. Members noted that 77 firefighters from across the UK went to Turkey (including 4 dogs) who were deployed really quickly; with 6 of the Firefighters and 2 dogs from Lancashire. The dogs had been crucial to scent live casualties and the team effected successful rescues.

The Chairman presented the Director of Corporate Services / Treasurer to the Authority, Mr Keith Mattinson with a clock in recognition of his long service, dedication and hard work. The Authority applauded Mr Mattinson and extended their best wishes to him for the future. Members had been involved in running the recruitment process last year and Mr Steven Brown would be starting in the role at the end of the month.

The Chairman welcomed Councillor Rick Scott who had replaced Councillor Tony Williams on the Authority from Blackpool Council.

2. Pay policy statement for 2023/2024

In accordance with the provisions of the Localism Act 2011 a pay policy statement for 2023/24 was considered and approved. The pay policy published data on senior salaries and

the structure of the workforce and demonstrated the principles of transparency. The pay policy statement set out the Authority's policies for the financial year relating to the remuneration of its chief officers; the remuneration of its lowest paid employees; and the relationship between the remuneration of its chief officers and that of other employees who were not chief officers.

3. Financial strategy including revenue budget 2023/24 - 2027/28

The Financial Strategy encompassed: the Treasury Management Strategy, Reserves and Balances Policy, the Capital Strategy and Budget and the Revenue Budget.

The Authority considered and approved a report of the Treasurer that presented a gross revenue budget requirement for 2023/24 of £68.183m. The Authority considered and approved council tax options for 2023/24 which met the requirements to deliver a balanced budget and maintain an adequate level of reserves and determined a £5.00 increase (6.4%, 10 pence per week) resulting in a council tax of £82.27 for a Band D property.

REPORT OF THE LANCASHIRE COMBINED FIRE AUTHORITY 24 APRIL 2023

1. Chairman's Welcome And Introduction

The Chairman welcomed Mr Steven Brown as the new Director of Corporate Services and Treasurer to the Authority.

2. UK's International Search and Rescue Team - Deployment To Turkey

Group Manager Mark Warwick and Crew Manager Lindsay Sielski attended to provide a presentation to Members on the UK's International Search and Rescue Team (ISAR) deployment to Southern Turkey which had been discussed at the last meeting.

Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service (LFRS) had been a member of UK International Search and Rescue (ISAR) for a number of years and had been deployed to many countries to provide humanitarian support to unexpected disasters. This incident was a quick, same day deployment to Turkey following a huge earthquake on the morning of 6 February 2023. The team consisted of 77 firefighters from across the UK, 4 dogs, structural engineers and medical teams. There were around 6,000 ISAR personnel attending from across the world to help, working alongside local people who provided intelligence and aid. LFRS had 6 firefighters who were part of the UK ISAR team. These volunteers were vaccinated, had undergone rigorous and ongoing training (on processes and equipment) to gain specialist

knowledge and skills to operate in hazardous conditions and were available to respond at short notice on behalf of the Government Foreign Commonwealth and Development Office.

On arrival the team set up base, electronic communications were down and moving around the collapsed buildings and rubble was a challenge. In addition, Turkey continued to be hit by thousands of after-shocks with risk assessments needing to be fluid. Senses were overwhelmed by dust and people in disarray. The dogs were a great asset and did not let the team down. They were able to cover large areas of ground which reduced the risk to firefighters and they were able to find signs of life to provide those searching with information to assist with digging locations.

The Authority applauded the efforts of the highly motivated and dedicated ISAR teams.

3. Operational Incidents of Interest

Members noted the increased likelihood of lithium-Ion power sources finding their way into waste recycling plants which thereby increased fire risk. This issue was a challenge for the industry given lithium-ion batteries emitted toxic gasses, were unstable when damaged and could auto-ignite. Battery packs used in electric vehicles were large however, incidents were often from smaller batteries such as used in e-cigarettes, e-scooters and many other household devices. Many waste sites screened waste to identify the presence of power sources and sift them out however the prevalence from a myriad of appliances which used them resulted in some finding their way into the system. This was a national issue which required end-to-end analysis to improve processes together with support from the Fire Sector and Environmental Agency to reduce fire risk.

REPORT OF THE LANCASHIRE COMBINED FIRE AUTHORITY 26 JUNE 2023

1. Combined Fire Authority Annual Meeting

The meeting held 26 June was the Authority's Annual Meeting and Members appointed County Councillors D O'Toole and J Shedwick as Chair and Vice Chair of the Authority respectively for 2023/24.

2. Composition Of The Combined Fire Authority

The Composition of the Combined Fire Authority for 2023/24 included 2 new Members, Loraine Cox from Lancashire County Council and Graham Baker from Blackpool Council.

3. Safety During Hajj Campaign

The Authority was advised that the Service expected thousands of Lancashire residents to travel for Hajj (an annual Islamic pilgrimage to Mecca, Saudi Arabia). Therefore, a unique safety-focused UK initiative had been developed with partners (Lancashire Constabulary, Public Health Blackburn with Darwen Council, Lancashire County Council Public Health and The Lancashire Council of Mosques) to produce information that supported people to enjoy the experience and remain safe during and after their journey back home to Lancashire.

An overview of the 'Safety During Hajj Campaign' was presented for information. It was noted that the campaign included a 45-minute presentation which added to religious and cultural information developed by scholars to integrate fire safety information and broader safety information such as what to prepare beforehand, health information and how to keep safe in unfamiliar surroundings amongst a huge volume of people in the locality. The presentation had been delivered to 12 places within Lancashire and 58 organisations across the western world with positive feedback received.

CC Shedwick had attended a Hajj Safety launch event on 2 June 2023 at the Jamia Masjid Ibrahim UK Islamic Mission in Burnley which was opened by Lord Wajid Khan (Vice Chair of the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Hajj and Umrah). He commended ACFO Charters, and Mr Patel, Community Safety Advisor for leading this initiative. The presentation delivered at the event was very informative and well received.

ACFO Charters and Mr Patel later attended a live show on Pendle Radio where people were able to dial in. There had been a lot of interest including from organisations with callers from across Europe (France, Belgium and Spain) and from people who had arrived in Mecca.

4. Annual Safety, Health And Environment Report 2022/23

The Authority noted that the Service had again seen a very positive year in terms of overall safety, health and environment performance.

In March 2023 the auditor from British Assessment Bureau carried out a surveillance audit against health and safety standard ISO 45001:2018 and environment ISO 14001: 2015. The scope for both standards was 'The Provision of Fire, Rescue and Supporting Services across Lancashire'. This broad scope encompassed all Service activities with audit visits to Service HQ site, Service Training Centre, four fire stations that operated different duty systems and to a number of supporting departments. Continued certification was granted without any (minor or major) non-conformance.