

**REPORT OF THE LANCASHIRE COMBINED FIRE AUTHORITY
20 FEBRUARY 2017**

INTEGRATED RISK MANAGEMENT PLAN 2017 - 2022

Integrated risk management planning provided Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service (LFRS) with the opportunity to detail what the Service aimed to do to identify and consider the full range of fire and rescue related risks across Lancashire. This ensured that both our communities and other interested parties were provided with details of how we intend to fulfil our responsibilities in a clear, cohesive manner. The Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP) 2017-2022 had been developed to be an overarching, enabling document. It provided hyperlinks to all of LFRS's strategic documents thereby remaining up-to-date over the lifespan of the plan. The plan did not however detail the Emergency Cover review; this would be undertaken and consulted upon separately during 2017/18.

The Community Safety Strategy had been encapsulated within the IRMP highlighting the importance of the inter-locking components of Start Safe, Live Safe, Age Safe and Road Safe that remained at the core of our approach to reducing risk and improving public safety. Significant progress had been made with Climate Change and Environment responsibilities which were now thoroughly embedded and entrenched within Service planning, policies and procedures. Therefore the Climate Change and Environment Strategy had also been encompassed within this new IRMP, thus negating any further need for a separate Climate Change and Environment Strategy document.

The approved IRMP 2017-22 would be published in early April 2017 and available to access/download from the LFRS website.

NEXT STEPS FOR FIRE REFORM – MINISTERIAL SPEECH – 7 FEBRUARY 2017

On 7 February 2017 the Rt Hon Brandon Lewis, Minister of State for Policing and the Fire Service, gave a speech on the "Next Steps for Fire Reform". A full transcript of the speech was provided for Members. The tone recognised that some progress had been made in improving the Fire and Rescue Service (FRS) but it had to go "further and faster". The speech was linked to those from previous years to emphasise reoccurring themes that had still to be addressed which were: Outdated Working Policies; Lack of Diversity; No Independent Scrutiny; and Improving Procurement Procedures.

The lack of independent scrutiny would be remedied by the introduction of a new Inspectorate for the Fire Service looking at efficiency and effectiveness, with particular reference to response and prevention, value for money, understanding demand and future risks, together with its leadership, training, diversity, values and culture. These areas would be complemented by thematic inspection, the first area being diversity, flexible employment and collaboration. Inspections would commence this year and be complemented by a transformed peer review process. Greater transparency and accountability would also be facilitated by the introduction of a new website providing incident and performance data.

Regarding the Police and Crime Act, the Minister confirmed the new term of Police, Fire and Crime Commissioners. He did not propose a blanket takeover of FRS by these commissioners but did emphasise that a local business case could be made and that FRA

were obliged to co-operate in preparing this. The objection of a FRA to any proposed change would not be enough on its own to prevent a change occurring.

He indicated his intention to work productively with the newly constituted National Fire Chiefs Council, which he viewed as the operational voice of the FRS. Also mentioned was the Chief Fire Officers Association's work on peer review, procurement and standards. There was also an increased emphasis on collaboration and he highlighted best practice with some examples provided.

The Minister announced his intention to set up an Independent Standards Body. This would provide guidance and standards on leadership, workforce development, equality and diversity and codify effective practice. Reference was made to culture and the Adrian Thomas Review. The speech also reminded the audience of the disparity in the cost of some goods procured by FRS exposed in a recent Home Office Survey.

The next expected steps for the government were to enshrine its stated direction of travel with a refreshed National Framework, to be published later this year. This would clarify national expectations and responsibilities. Under the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004, FRAs "must have regard to the Framework in carrying out their functions". If an Authority fails to act in accordance with the Framework, the Secretary then has powers of intervention.

ADRIAN THOMAS' INDEPENDENT REVIEW OF CONDITIONS OF SERVICE FOR FRS STAFF IN ENGLAND – FEBRUARY 2015

A report regarding the publication of the Adrian Thomas Review on Conditions of Service was presented at the last CFA meeting in December 2016, where it was agreed that a detailed assessment of the Service's position against the findings of the report would be presented to this Authority meeting. The publication of the report in November 2016 was over two years after the Report was commissioned and a number of comments made had now become historical in context or overtaken by events. Similarly, LFRS could demonstrate its position in a favourable light in respect of many of the findings. In effect, many of the issues directly in LFRS' control were being progressed within existing activity.

The findings were grouped into 5 areas: i) the Working Environment; ii) Documented Conditions of Service; iii) Industrial Relations; iv) Retained Duty System and v) Management of the Fire & Rescue Service.

The themes emerging for consideration in the sector were:

- How can some authorities make progress whilst others do not;
- Greater cross fertilisation of issues should be developed (institutional learning);
- The Conditions of Service and negotiation arrangements should be "modernised" including Role Maps and Duty Systems and content;
- Issues in respect of employee engagement including culture and trust, including equality & diversity and bullying and harassment issues;
- National Leadership development/standards;
- Remove the Right to Strike;
- Greater use of Retained Duty System, ie more RDS appliances;
- Future Recruitment.

The key strap line was “where change is common sense, it should become common practice”.

REVENUE BUDGET 2017/18 - 2021/22

The Authority considered a report of the Treasurer that presented a gross revenue budget requirement for 2017/18 of £54.3m. This represented a reduction of 2.3% and allowed for the identification of £1.5m of efficiency savings. The Government had confirmed that the multi-year settlement offers had been agreed with all single purpose fire and rescue authorities. Hence, barring exceptional circumstances, and subject to the normal statutory consultation process for the local government finance settlement, the Government expected these amounts to be presented to Parliament each year. The Authority noted that the final Local Government Finance Settlement had not yet been received as it would not be debated in Parliament until 20 February at the earliest; hence it had been assumed that the final settlement would be consistent with the draft figures reported in December, i.e. £25.3m.

The Authority considered 3 council tax options for 2017/18 which met the requirements to deliver a balanced budget and maintain an adequate level of reserves and unanimously determined a council tax freeze which maintained council tax at £65.50 for a Band D property. To meet the reduced budget requirement of £409k associated with this the Authority also unanimously approved the drawdown of £313k from the LGPS pension surplus with the remaining £96k being met from an additional savings target.

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