

Report of the Lancashire Combined Fire Authority - 28 April 2014

1. Formal Opening of Chorley Community Fire Station

The Chairman advised that the official opening of Chorley Community Fire Station by Councillor John Walker, Mayor of Chorley Council and Mayoress Mrs Marie Walker would be taking place on Thursday 1 May 2014. Authority Members were invited to attend the event which would commence at 1100 hours.

2. Prince's Trust Celebrate Success Awards – National Breakthrough Award, Danielle Fisher

Danielle Fisher was in attendance at the meeting. Lancashire Fire & Rescue Service (LFRS) has been involved with the Prince's Trust programme for over 20 years and it has been the Delivery Partner Manager for the Prince's Trust Team Programme for 13 years; after taking overall responsibility for the management and delivery of the programme in April 2001. Since 2001 LFRS has supported over 3,500 young people through, nearing 300 Team Programmes. The programme aims to engage with young people aged 16-25 and to facilitate their personal development and teamwork skills. A key outcome of the programme is to re-engage what are often disenfranchised young people and help them to develop their skills, confidence and motivation to increase their employability and also to get their lives working again.

The Celebrate Success Awards recognises the achievements of exceptional young people in education, skills and development, employment, enterprise and in the community. The North West Celebrate Success Awards were held on 6 November 2013. Of the 21 nominees, 5 were from LFRS Prince's Trust Team programmes; with 3 of these ultimately being successful.

Danielle won the Breakthrough Award which recognises the progress of young people who have developed new skills to enable them to make positive steps in facing their challenges and stabilising their lives. As a result, Danielle went through to the Celebrate Success UK final held on 12 March 2014 where she beat off some strong competition to win the "National Breakthrough Award" which was presented by HRH Prince Charles. The Chairman, Chief Fire Officer and all Authority Members paid tribute to Danielle and her achievements and their congratulations have been placed on record.

Members of the Prince's Trust Preston Team 55 had been invited to attend the meeting by the Chairman. Members of the Preston Team, Aiden Cowell and Edward Bromilow were in attendance at the meeting together with Shaun Walton, Service Delivery Manager and Helen Stanley, Prince's Trust Team Leader. The 12-week Prince's Trust programme includes undertaking a project based in the local community and for this element of their course Preston Team 55 decided to create a short educational film that concentrated on the consequences of making a malicious call. The Team provided funding for the film from bag-packing at a local supermarket; they then: produced, directed and starred in a really good piece of work that had received 1,300 views from across the UK. Feedback has been received from other Fire and Rescue Services and Partner Agencies who want to use it as part of their own educational programmes. The film entitled 'Four Years' was shown to Authority Members who placed on record their congratulations to the Preston Team 55 for its production. The film can be viewed via following the link: <http://vimeo.com/87932372>.

3. Operational Assessment and Fire Peer Challenge 2014

The Fire and Rescue Service (FRS) has a long standing commitment to sector-led improvement, self-awareness and independent review. The Operational Assessment (OpA) process began in 2009 and was developed by the Chief Fire Officers Association (CFOA), in partnership with the Local Government Association (LGA) and the Chief Fire and Rescue Advisor (CFRA). The overall process has a strong operational focus and comprises of a self-assessment and external peer challenge and is designed to allow a whole system look at how a Fire Authority leads, prioritises and delivers the interrelated functions of prevention, protection and response. The process is designed to form a structured and consistent basis to drive continuous improvement within FRS; and to provide Elected Members and Chief Fire Officers with information that allows them to challenge their operational service delivery to ensure it is: efficient, effective and robust. Lancashire FRS last undertook an OpA and Fire Peer Challenge in 2010.

The Authority was updated on the 2014 process which took place on the 1 – 4 April 2014 led by Chief Fire Officer, Ian Cartwright (Cumbria FRS). On the final day, the Peer Review Team presented their initial findings to the Authority Chairman, Vice-Chairman and Members of the Executive Board. In summary:

- The Peer Review Team found ‘nothing of significance’ that would cause problems, nor any issues ‘with self-awareness’;
- They highlighted that there was a good correlation between their findings when compared to the Service’s own self-assessment and resulting OpA Improvement Action Plan which the Service had prepared prior to the process. Confidence could be drawn from this as it meant that the Service had good levels of self-awareness and that the direction of travel and the improvement actions which the Service had set largely mirrored those found by an ‘independent’ Peer Review Team;
- The Peer Review Team consistently reported how engaging and professional staff were throughout the week, whether that was in the form of: a one to one interview, focus group or a visit to any of the six fire stations they attended;
- The Peer Review Team identified that there was a clear vision in ‘Making Lancashire Safer’, together with effective outcome-based performance and robust emergency response arrangements;
- They highlighted as strengths the pace and focus of leadership; that staff were empowered and confident to take decisions alongside good internal working relationships;
- The Peer Review Team highlighted a number of ‘areas to explore’ notably:
 - Operational Risk Information;
 - Corporate Planning (strategic co-ordination of change);
 - Corporate Risk Management;
 - Workforce Planning;
 - Management / use of information.

Pending receipt of the final report, work had already begun to cross check the findings of the Peer Review Team against the Service’s OpA Improvement Plan, produced prior to the review. All the main areas highlighted above were already components of the existing improvement plan. Once received a formal report would be brought to the Authority which contained more detail, however, it was clear the Service was moving in the right direction and performing strongly.

4. Exercise Mallard

As part of the Community Safety Reports item, the Authority received a video and presentation by Ben Norman, Community Protection Manager for the Eastern area regarding Exercise Mallard. The exercise was a live-play, operationally focussed exercise which took place over Saturday 1 and Sunday 2 March 2014. The exercise was designed to test a multi-agency response to a major rail incident and was located upon the West Coast Railways main base at Carnforth, Lancashire.

The Authority was reassured that such major, complex, multi-agency training exercises were undertaken to test resilience and response arrangements and to identify areas for improvement; acknowledging the important role that partners played. A copy of the video can be seen via the following the link:

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rGrntt-wkco&feature=share&list=UUDqXUU_0Mo6rHbUH0ygno5g&index=3).

FRANK DE MOLFETTA
Chairman

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