

REPORT OF THE LANCASHIRE COMBINED FIRE AUTHORITY (CFA) HELD 27 JUNE 2022

1. COMBINED FIRE AUTHORITY ANNUAL MEETING

The meeting held 27 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 2022/23.

2. COMPOSITION OF THE COMBINED FIRE AUTHORITY

The Composition of the Combined Fire Authority for 2022/23 included 3 new Members from Lancashire County Council: Steve Rigby, Ash Sutcliffe and Barrie Yates.

3. REFORMING OUR FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE WHITE PAPER

The Authority was made aware that the long awaited Home Office publication "Reforming Our Fire and Rescue Service" White Paper had been published for consultation from 18 May 2022 to 26 July 2022. The Chief Fire Officer would be drawing together a draft response on behalf of the Authority following discussion at a forthcoming Strategy Day. It was acknowledged there was potential for additional political group and individual responses and that the Service would be submitting a separate response.

4. ANNUAL SAFETY, HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENT REPORT 2021/22

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

In March 2022 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 five fire stations that operated different duty systems and to a number of supporting departments. Continued certification was granted without any non-conformance. During 2021/22 there were 85 accidents, 94 near misses and 14 RIDDOR events. The report provided a summary of the total accident and ill-health statistics for 2021/22. A comparison against previous performance showed an overall downward trend from absence following work related injury/illness however the figures reported in 2018/19, 2020/21 and 2021/22 had seen a smaller number of staff away from work for long term absence (which related to safety events which had impacted the overall performance). The focus for health and wellbeing had continued to be on supporting staff, colleagues, families, and friends in response to the Covid 19 pandemic. A range of material continued to be developed to support staff through this difficult time and a new support resource, Wellbeing Support Dogs had been introduced. The Carbon Management Plan 2010 included a target of 40% carbon emission reduction by March 2030 from a baseline of 4352 tonnes of CO₂ in 2007/08. The Service had achieved an overall reduction of 24.9% by March 2022.

5. MEMBER CHAMPION ACTIVITY REPORT

The Authority received a presentation from pupils from Cardinal Allen Catholic High School, Fleetwood who had been invited by County Councillor Andrea Kay, Health and Wellbeing Champion to present their energy saving thoughts for the future. These included: better insulation in all public buildings, better public transport systems, the planting of more trees in parks, grants for land owners, campaigns on busses, switching lights off, insulation for houses, encouragement of the bee population and a big wind turbine on the school field.

6. OPERATIONAL INCIDENTS OF INTEREST

The Authority received a short presentation on a large fire which had occurred on Church Street Preston on 19 May 2022. The former Odeon site (more recently the Evoque nightclub) was a sizeable incident that ran for a number of days. It was a complex incident because of the condition of the building and reports at an early stage that there was the potential for people to be inside. The presentation gave an overview of the incident. Hazards included: an unstable structure, large smoke plume, asbestos suspected, difficult access (due to the proximity of other buildings), electric and gas supplies were present. Operational priorities were to: save saveable lives, firefighter safety, protection of property and the environment and the reduction of the impact on the community. The incident lasted throughout the evening and a number of partnership agencies were on the scene (Lancashire Constabulary, North West Ambulance Service, Preston City Council, Lancashire County Council, Cadent gas and Electricity North West). Crews and Officers remained on scene for over 3 days.

DAVID O'TOOLE
Chair

LFRS
Fulwood