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**Enquiries to: Mrs J Head  
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**Our reference: JH/CSP**

**Date: 28 October 2024**

## **AGENDA**

**TO: THE MEMBERS OF THE COMMUNITY SCRUTINY PANEL**

### **CUMBRIA POLICE, FIRE & CRIME COMMISSIONER'S COMMUNITY SCRUTINY PANEL**

A Meeting of the Community Scrutiny Panel Panel will take place on **Thursday 7 November 2024 at 10.15 am in The Community Room**, Cumbria Fire and Rescue Service Headquarters, Carleton Avenue, Penrith, CA10 2FA.

**G Shearer  
Chief Executive**

**Note:** Members are advised that allocated car parking for the meeting is available in the Visitors Car Park to the left of the main Police Headquarters building.

### **PANEL MEMBERSHIP**

Jane Scattergood (Chair)  
Eloise Abbott  
Andrew Dodd  
Meg Masters  
Ben Phillips  
Alison Ramsey  
Shaun Thomson  
Penny Walker

# AGENDA

## PART 1– ITEMS TO BE CONSIDERED IN THE PRESENCE OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

### 1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

### 2. DISCLOSURE OF PERSONAL INTERESTS

Members are invited to disclose any personal/prejudicial interest which they may have in any of the items on the Agenda. If the personal interest is a prejudicial interest, then the individual member should not participate in a discussion of the matter and must withdraw from the meeting room unless a dispensation has previously been obtained.

### 3. URGENT BUSINESS AND EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

To consider (i) any urgent items of business and (ii) whether the press and public should be excluded from the Meeting during consideration of any Agenda item where there is likely disclosure of information exempt under s.100A(4) and Part I Schedule A of the Local Government Act 1972 and the public interest in not disclosing outweighs any public interest in disclosure.

## PART 2– ITEMS TO BE CONSIDERED IN THE ABSENCE OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

Number	Agenda Item	Allocated Time
4.	<b>NOTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING &amp; ACTION SHEET</b> To confirm the restricted notes of the meeting of the Ethics and Integrity Panel held on 08 February 2024 (copy enclosed).	5 minutes
5.	<b>CORPORATE UPDATE</b> To receive a corporate briefing from Assistant Chief Fire Officer Brian Massie and the OPFCC Chief Executive Gill Shearer	10 minutes
6.	<b>INFORMATION MANAGEMENT</b> To receive a copy of the data review report and to note a report by Cumbria Fire and Rescue Service on their compliance with Data Protection Legislation (copy enclosed)	5 minutes

7.	<p><b>CIVIL CLAIMS</b></p> <p>(i) To receive a report on the position and steps taken to ensure all employees have a DBS check. Action taken on those who have not complied.</p> <p>(ii) The Panel to provide feedback from their DBS Check dip sample session.</p>	5 minutes
8	<p><b>MISCONDUCT</b></p> <p>(i) To receive a report on the current position in relation to misconduct cases</p> <p>(ii) Head of People and Talent to update on the HMICFRS Spotlight Report</p> <p>(iii) Members to feedback from their dip sample sessions</p>	10 minutes
9	<p><b>WORKFORCE COMPLAINTS</b></p> <p>(i) Report on current position and introduction of the new workforce complaints process.</p> <p>(ii) Members to feedback from their dip sample session</p>	10 minutes
10	<p><b>RECRUITMENT AND PROMOTION BOARDS</b></p> <p>Highlight Report from the Head of People and Talent on recruitment process and promotion board process</p>	10 minutes
11	<p><b>2025 ANNUAL WORK PROGRAMME, MEETING AND DIP SAMPLE DATES</b></p> <p>To consider and agree the Panel's annual work programme and meeting dates for 2025 - <i>OPFCC Governance Manager</i></p>	5 minutes



## Agenda Item 04

### COMMUNITY SCRUTINY PANEL

Notes of a meeting of the Community Scrutiny Panel held on  
Thursday 5 September 2024, Control Room Meeting Room 2, Fire HQ at 2.00 pm

#### **PRESENT**

Jane Scattergood (Chair)  
Eloise Abbott  
Andrew Dodd  
Meg Masters  
Ben Phillips  
Alex Roche  
Shaun Thomson

#### **Also present:**

Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner David Allen  
T/Assistant Chief Fire Officer Ian Seel  
Head of People and Talent – Kristine Ward  
HR Manager – Jemma Taylor  
Area Manager, Prevention and Protection - Lauren Woodward  
OPFCC Chief Executive – Gill Shearer  
OPFCC Governance Manager - Joanne Head

The Chair welcomed everyone, particularly the new Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner, Mr David Allen. Everyone introduced themselves and Mr Allen advised he was very pleased to be attending the meeting and looking forward to seeing the work of the Panel.

Prior to the meeting commencing the Commissioner took the opportunity to present Mr Alex Roche with a gift and thanked him for his work on the Panel during the last eight years upon his retirement from the Panel.

#### **28. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies from Alison Ramsey and Penny Walker were received.

#### **29. DISCLOSURE OF PERSONAL INTERESTS**

There were no disclosures of personal interest regarding any agenda item.

#### **30. URGENT BUSINESS**

There were no items of urgent business to be considered by the Panel.



### 31. NOTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The notes of the meeting held on Thursday 8 February 2024 previously circulated with the agenda were agreed.

**AGREED;** that the notes of the meeting held on 8May 2024 were agreed.

### 32. CORPORATE UPDATE

T/Assistant Seel briefed the panel on work being carried out by Cumbria Fire and Rescue Service.

The Grenfell Inquiry's final phase 2 report has been published which has rightly dominated the news over the last 24hrs. The inquiry was separated into two phases.

- Phase 1 focused on the events on the night
- Phase 2 examined the cause of the event.

The majority of the impacts and subsequent reform on the way in which the Fire & Rescue sector manage its prevention, protection and operational response to tall buildings has been underway since The Chairman published his Phase 1 report on 30 October 2019.

Police and prosecutors have said they will need until the end of 2025 to complete their investigation, before handing it on to the Crown Prosecution Service. And then final decisions on potential criminal charges will not come until the end of 2026.

Cumbria has a very low number of tall buildings, however the service continues to review their arrangements when any new information or guidance is made available. The Fire and Rescue Service are convening at the end of September to formulate their next steps in response to the Phase 2 report.

The Chief Fire Officer had recently had a pre-planned operation and was now recovering. In the interim, and to provide additional executive leadership support, Mr Paul Hancock has joined the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) on a part time basis. Paul brings a wealth of experience in strategic leadership in the Fire Service and this addition support is welcome as we continue the journey of disaggregation and preparation for the HMIC inspection next year.

The latest cohort of 16 wholtime recruits had commenced their training this week in Barrow. The course will conclude on 22 November following which the new Firefighters will be allocated their Watch and Fire Station and start their operational career in December.

HMICFRS published their thematic report on Standards of behaviour: The handling of misconduct in fire and rescue services. The report issued 15 recommendations to every Fire & Rescue Service. A bench marking exercise had been completed against existing working practices and it was felt that the service could evidence that they met 9



of the recommendations in full, with partial evidence against the remaining 6. There were no recommendations that they had not already identified or were carrying out work towards achieving. We now continue with the remaining actions need to achieve all 15 recommendations by the deadlines that have been set by the HMIC within the report.

Preparation continues to take place for the forthcoming HMICFRS inspection in the New Year. A significant piece of work was being carried out to align their Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP) to corporate strategies and publish annual delivery plans, bringing together the financial requirements to deliver objectives within allocated budgets.

The OPFCC Chief Executive provided a corporate update to the Panel. Following the election the new Commissioner, David Allen had plans are underway to develop a new Police, Fire and Crime Plan. Over the past few weeks' partners, stakeholders and the communities of Cumbria have been canvassed for their views on what the policing and fire priorities should be for 2024-2028. The consultation ended on the 5 September, following which the plan will be developed and be launched in November 2024 setting out priorities for the next 4 years. He advised the Panel that he was keen to continue work in creating more blue light collaboration across the county where feasible, gaining benefits for communities and staff. The enabling of other functions across the police and fire services could also provide opportunities and efficiencies.

The Commissioner had recently celebrated 100 days in office; where he had published the differences he had made since coming into office and plans for the future. He had been appointed to a number of national portfolio roles, including the Police Digital Services (PDS) Board, PDS Audit and Risk Committee, Vice Chair for the Serious Organised Crime and Specialist Capabilities Board for the Association of Police and Crime Commissioners (APCC) and sitting on the Blue Light Commercial Board.

**AGREED;** that,

- (i) the updates be noted;
- (ii) a copy of the HMICFRS report into misconduct handling and the gap analysis to be provided to the Panel, along with an update on the work being carried out.

### **33. HOME FIRE SAFETY VISITS**

The Area Manager Prevention and Protection presented two reports and the draft CFRS prevention strategy. Home Fire Safety Visits were identified through a number of ways including referrals from partner agencies including the police, Adult Social Care, NWAS and oxygen providers. During 2023/24 CFRS completed 8,324 visits with a view to preventing accidental dwelling fires or fatalities.

All referrals were triaged and risk assessed for the different needs and how urgent the visit should take place. Home visits are conducted by Community Safety Advisors (CSAs) and operational crews. Upon completion of a visit the findings are scored and where vulnerabilities are identified referrals to partners are made.



To assist fire staff to carry out the visits the National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) released 9 training modules at the end of August. These training packages will be used to support staff carrying out the visits.

A new case management system had recently been procured in conjunction with Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service and using government grants. It was anticipated that the new system will bring in new technology to the service which in turn would bring about efficiencies.

A member asked what the three areas for improvement were as identified in the HMICFRS inspection. The Area Manager advised that they were the development of a Prevention Strategy; evaluation of prevention activity and evaluation of prevention resources. The service had re-structured and now had two managers who had prevention as part of their roles.

Members felt that the draft CFRS Prevention Strategy was good, however the use of language such as 'fatal' whilst officers and staff may be used to that terminology, members of the public would not be. It was proposed that this be reviewed and potentially alternative wording be used.

#### Dip Sample Session

Some of the Panel members fed back on the recent dip sample session. This was the first time that they had sampled this area of business and wished to express their thanks to Station Manager, Andrew Lowes for his support on the day.

The Area Manager thanked the members for taking part in the session and felt it was a valuable exercise to understand that fire officers and staff were delivering a good service and enabled training to be shaped in the future. Often information such as dates of birth and ethnicity were not collected and this was valuable information to enable the service to identify who was requiring help and vulnerable individuals were not being disadvantaged. The members felt it was important for the form to illustrate why the visits had been carried out and the actions taken.

Understanding the referral process to the outcome and what difference it was making was essential. Members suggested it was an opportunity to work across different partners in the blue light services or NHS who potentially came into contact with the same individuals. This could also include energy networks to assess vulnerable customers and this was something that the service could look at going forward.

It was proposed that some members accompany fire officers when they were carrying out visits to understand the complete process and ensure that those carrying out the assessments were competent in their role. This would then enable the Panel to scrutinise the ethics, integrity and quality of the way in which such visits were conducted and how staff selected and approached them.

Over 47 million visitors come to Cumbria each year during the summer period inflating the resident population. The service also had to deal with rescue situations in lakes or the fells. A member asked whether or not the service worked within the main holiday



destinations to provide preventative advice to holiday makers. ACFO Seel advised that last year they had directed some resources and had taken smaller fire vehicles using them as community prevention into the central lakes working with the police, rangers and on-call staff to target hot spots or areas of higher risk. During this time they had moved on over 200 people illegally camping in various areas.

**AGREED:** that,

- (i) the report be noted;
- (ii) alternative wording be considered within the Prevention Strategy when referring to fatalities;
- (iii) Panel members be afforded the opportunity to accompany fire staff when carrying out HFVS to gain first hand experience.

### **34. DISCLOSURE BARRING SERVICE (DBS) CHECKS**

On 6 July 2023 the National Fire Chief's Council (NFCC) passed new legislation to include Fire and Rescue Authorities in the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions). This meant that everyone who works or volunteers for CFRS are now required to have a Standard DBS check as part of their appointment.

The HR Manager advised over the past 14 months over 600 fire employees had now completed their DBS checks. Where a positive disclosure was returned the individual's line manager would meet with the employee and complete a risk assessment. They would also document their fact-finding discussion with staff, particularly if information was not disclosed during the amnesty period. Final approval and sign off was then made by the Head of People & Talent and CFRS Safeguarding Lead. The Panel members commended the HR department on their hard work to achieve this work over a 14 month period.

Anyone joining the services was required to have a DBS check prior to their employment or appointment being confirmed. All staff would be required to have their DBS checks repeated on a rolling three-year period. Work was being carried out to identify who would be reviewed first to prevent the whole service having to go through the process at the same time. The Panel asked that they be kept updated through future meetings on the outcomes of the next tranche of DBS checks.

#### Dip Sample Session Feedback

The members had carried out a dip sample session reviewing the risk assessment forms which had been completed. They had provided their feedback at the time and were advised that the suggestions that they had made had been immediately implemented to improve the process.

**AGREED;** that, the

- (i) report and feedback be noted; and





- (ii) Panel be updated on the outcomes of the next tranche of DBS checks.

### 35. COMPLAINTS AND QSIs

The OPFCC Governance Manager guided members through a report which detailed the number of complaints and quality of service issues which the Commissioner received in relation to Cumbria Fire and Rescue Service (CFRS).

From 1 January to 30 June 2024 the OPFCC had received 2 quality of service issues raised by members of the public in Cumbria. These related to a request for a flashing house smoke alarm for a deaf family and questions raised about fire equipment in the community.

Two complaints had been received during the reporting period. The first was in relation the previous Deputy Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner and the second related to CFRS response to a consultation process.

No complaints regarding the Chief Fire Officer had been received during the reporting period.

AGREED: that, the report be noted.

**Meeting ended at 2:50 pm**

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
Panel Chair

# Community Scrutiny Panel – (Fire) Action Sheet: 05/09/2024

## Agenda Item No 4b

Minute Number / Topic	Action to be taken	Person responsible OPFCC / Force	Report back to Panel	Date action completed	Review Date
<b>DATE OF MEETING: 08 February 2024</b>					
Information Management Compliance	(i) a copy of the data review report be provided to the Panel	Mark Clement	<del>August 2024</del>	Deferred to November 2024	
<b>DATE OF MEETING: 08 May 2024</b>					
Civil Claims	Comparison information for other fire services be included within future reports. The level of excess to be paid by CFRS for insured civil claims to be provided within reports; and Future reports to contain more detailed information to enable scrutiny by the Panel.	Mark Clement	November 2024		
Employee Absences	Future reports to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The top 5 causes of absence and how the service was supporting or mitigating them</li> <li>• Average absence figures including any targets which are set by the service.</li> <li>• Age and gender – these may also assist in mapping attrition for the service.</li> <li>• Details of support provision, changes to policy or procedures</li> </ul>	Kristine Ward	November 2024	Deferred to 2025	
On-Call Recruitment	(ii) more statistical data to be included in future reports (iii) a six-monthly update on the recruitment process be provided to the November 2024 meeting.	Orlanda Wright	November 2024		

# Community Scrutiny Panel – (Fire) Action Sheet: 05/09/2024

Minute Number / Topic	Action to be taken	Person responsible OPFCC / Force	Report back to Panel	Date action completed	Review Date
<b>DATE OF MEETING: 05 September 2024</b>					
HMICFRS Thematic Inspection	A copy of the HMICFRS report into misconduct handling and the gap analysis to be provided to the Panel, along with an update on the work being carried out.	Kristine Ward	November 2024		
Home Fire Safety Visits	(i) Alternative wording be considered within the Prevention Strategy when referring to fatalities. (ii) Panel members be afforded the opportunity to accompany fire staff when carrying out HFVS to gain first-hand experience.	Lauren Woodward	February 2025		
DBS Checks	Panel be updated on the outcomes of the next tranche of DBS checks.	Kristine Ward	May 2025		

# Community Scrutiny Panel

## Title: OPFCC Corporate Update

Date of Meeting: 28 October 2024

Agenda Item No: 05a

Originating Officers: Gill Shearer, Chief Executive

This update provides the Community Scrutiny Panel with a headline summary of recent developments within the Office of the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner.

### 1. New Police, Fire & Crime Plan

The Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner and OPFCC have been working on developing a new Police, Fire and Crime Plan. The draft plan was presented to the Police, Fire and Crime Panel on 14 October 2024 for comment. Further work will be carried out over the coming weeks to develop the final version to be published.

### 2. Community Fund

In September the Commissioner opened the Community Fund to allow local organisations and community groups to access grants up to the value of £2,500 with a view to reducing anti-social behaviour or anti-social driving in communities. The applications are now being assessed and the Commissioner will make some final decisions in the coming weeks.

### 3. Public Accountability Conferences

The Commissioner held two public accountability conferences on 25 October 2024 where he held the Chief Constable and the Chief Fire Officer to account for the provision of policing and fire services within Cumbria.

In relation Cumbria Constabulary he focused on anti-social behaviour and outcome for victims' performance. For Cumbria Fire and Rescue Service the meeting focused on service performance and prevention activity.

# Cumbria Fire & Rescue Service

## CFRS Corporate Summary

**Date : 7<sup>th</sup> November 2024**

**Agenda Item : 05**

**Originating Officer : Mark Clement, Head of Safety and Assurance**

### 1. What is the Report About? (Executive Summary)

- 1.1 This document provides the Joint Audit Committee with a headline summary of recent developments both locally and nationally that may aid the Committee in their deliberations.

### 2. Local

#### Latest recruits

- 2.1 Our latest cohort of 16 wholetime recruits has commenced this week in Barrow. The course will conclude on 22 November where our new Firefighters will be allocated their Watch and Fire Station and start their operational career in December.

### 3 National

#### Grenfell Report

- 3.1 The Inquiry's final phase 2 report has been published which has rightly dominated the news over the last 24hrs. The inquiry was separated into two phases.
  - Phase 1 focused on the events on the night
  - Phase 2 examined the cause of the event
- 3.2 The majority of the impacts and subsequent reform on the way in which the Fire & Rescue sector manage its prevention, protection and operational response to tall buildings has been underway since The Chairman published his Phase 1 report on 30 October 2019.
- 3.3 Police and prosecutors have said they will need until the end of 2025 to complete their investigation, before handing it on to the Crown Prosecution Service. And then final decisions on potential criminal charges will not come until the end of 2026.

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- 3.4 Cumbria has a very low number of tall buildings, however we continue to review our arrangements when any new information or guidance is made available. We are convening at the end of September to formulate our next steps in response to the phase 2 report.

#### **4 Political / Governance**

##### **HMIC Report**

- 4.1 HMIC have recently published their thematic report: Standards of behaviour: The handling of misconduct in fire and rescue services.
- 4.2 The report issued 15 recommendation to every FRS. We have completed a bench marking exercise against our existing working practices. In summary we feel we can evidence that we meet 9 of the recommendations in full, with partial evidence against the remaining 6. There are no recommendations that have caught us cold or we were not already working towards. We now continue with the remaining actions need to achieve all 15 recommendations by the deadlines that have been set by the HMIC within the report.

##### **HMIC**

- 4.3 Preparation continues to take place for our forthcoming HMIC inspection in the new year. We are completing a significant piece of work to align our CRMP, to our corporate strategies and publish our annual delivery plans, bringing together the financial requirements to deliver objectives within allocated budgets.

Mark Clement  
Head of Safety and Assurance

## CFRS Information Management Compliance

**Date : 7<sup>th</sup> November 2024**

**Agenda Item : 06**

**Originating Officer : Mark Clement**

### **1 Executive Summary**

- 1.1 As a public authority, Cumbria Fire and Rescue Service (CFRS) is required to comply with the requirements of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and respond to information requests within the statutory timescale. It is also required to process personal data lawfully and respond to 'subject access requests' within the statutory timescales specified within the Data Protection Act 2018. This report provides an update on the levels of compliance achieved by the Service in respect of responses provided to freedom of information and subject access requests.

### **2 Recommendation**

- 2.1 That the members of the panel note the report,

### **3 Introduction**

- 3.1 As a public authority, CFRS is required to comply with the requirements of the Freedom of Information Act 2000. These requirements include the right of an individual to ask whether specified information is held by the Service and, if that is the case, to be provided with that information, subject to the applicability of relevant exemptions. With limited exceptions, the Act requires that a response to a request is provided within 20 working days of a request being received.
- 3.2 CFRS is also obliged to ensure that it complies with the requirements of the Data Protection Act 2018. These requirements include a provision for an applicant to request access to personal data which may be held about them. A response to a 'subject access request, as the right of access is commonly known as, is required to be provided within 1 calendar month, although this can be extended in limited circumstances by a further 2 months.
- 3.3 The Information Commissioner has indicated that an acceptable level of compliance for public authorities to meet, for both freedom of information and subject access requests, is 90% of requests closed within the statutory timescales.



- 3.4 Within CFRS the Head of Transformation acts as the Senior Information Risk Owner (SIRO). All FOI and SAR requests are processed by an Information Governance Officer and signed off by the Information Governance Lead.
- 3.5 Currently all Information Security services, such as penetration testing or Server security are delivered through Cumberland Council as part of the Service Level Agreement.

## **4 Issues for consideration**

### **Freedom of Information Requests**

- 4.1 Historically (Pre April 2023) all FOI requests were processed by Cumbria County Council, and those that related to functions that were historically delivered by the Council such as Finance, IT or Estates were responded to, often without the Services knowledge.
- 4.2 In the first six months of the 2024/25 financial year, CFRS has received 48 FOI requests, and of those it has met the 20 day deadline on 65% of occasions. The main reasons for delay in meeting the deadline are sourcing information from the two local authorities and the limited resource available to service requests.
- 4.3 The FOIs have covered a wide range of subjects, however we have received several about our fleet, Lithium ion battery fires and requests for sensitive contract information.
- 4.4 On a number of occasions we have taken advice from the Information Commissioners Office (ICO) and refused to release information.

### **Subject Access Requests**

- 4.5 Since April 2024, the Service has received one SAR.
- 4.6 This was in regard to a promotion process in which an external applicant was not offered a role within Service
- 4.7 The SAR was responded to within one month, however the requestee has come back several times for further clarification and we are currently working through these.
- 4.8 The Service has introduced a form on its website to standardise any further SAR requests, and purchased redaction software..

### **Planning Requests**

- 4.9 CFRS is a statutory consultee on planning applications that go through the two new local authorities.
- 4.10 The time required to respond to a planning application is 14 days, in the first six months of the year we have responded to 247 applications and met the target on 94.1% of occasions
- 4.11 In a similar fashion we have responded to 106 licensing applications and met the target



on 95.1% of occasions

## **5 Other Considerations**

- 5.1 The Service has created a training needs analysis in regard to information governance. This identifies different levels of training need from front line firefighter through to the SIRO.
- 5.2 Whilst a number of different officers within Service have received varying levels of training, the Service is aware of the need to embed consistent systems and processes that allow it to meet all its statutory responsibilities under Freedom of Information and GDPR.
- 5.3 An online training package has been developed in partnership with the Local Authority and this is being rolled out across the Service.

## **6 Conclusion**

- 6.1 In the first six months of 2024/25 CFRS has responded to a variety of requests for information. Our level of compliance for both SARs and Planning requests meets the legislative requirements..
- 6.2 We have had some issues in responding to FOIs largely due to the level of resource within Service. Given the similarity of a number of FOIs being received, we are currently exploring the option of publishing all FOI responses online, in an attempt to reduce the burden.

Mark Clement

Head of Safety and Assurance, [Mark.clement@cumbriafire.gov.uk](mailto:Mark.clement@cumbriafire.gov.uk)

# Cumbria Fire & Rescue Service

## CFRS Civil Claims

**Date : 7<sup>th</sup> November 2024**

**Agenda Item : 07**

**Originating Officer : Mark Clement, Head of Safety and Assurance**

### 1. What is the Report About? (Executive Summary)

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to provide the Ethics and Integrity Panel with an understanding of the current picture with regard to Claims against CFRS. This will provide a baseline on which further reports can be built, if required by the Committee. Since the last report to the committee there have been no claims against the Service, although there have been some movement in settlement figures.

### 2. Recommendation of the Head of Safety and Assurance

- 2.1 The Ethics and Integrity Panel are asked to note the contents of the report..

### 3. Background to the Proposals

- 3.1 Since 2010 there have been a total of 23 claims against the Service. These can be broken down into

Personal Accident	4
Public Liability	2
Employers Liability	17

- 3.2 These have occurred over a number of years averaging approx. 1.7 per year.
- 3.3 Of those 23 claims just over 50% (12) were successful with payouts ranging from £160 to £83k. The total amount of money paid out is £294k.
- 3.4 Currently there are 3 open cases with a reserve of £43k which are being dealt with through our solicitors and Zurich Insurance. Each of the 3 claims is challengeable and the Service is taking this forward.
- 3.5 CFRS is a learning organisation. In each case where an accident or adverse safety event occurs a Manager is assigned to carry out a thorough investigation and any lessons learnt are incorporated into business as usual
- 3.6 The Service also benefits from a national system of learning where points of note are shared between all services across the country.

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- 3.7 Finally the health and safety committee meet on a quarterly basis with the rep bodies and others to discuss incidents that have occurred over the preceding three months. In each case if learning is identified it is cascaded throughout the Service.
- 3.8 Benchmarking data has been sought from the panel in the past, however this is not publicly available.
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 4.1 There have been a small number of claims made against the Service over the preceding 10 years. Approx half have been successful and a total of £270k has been paid out over that period

Mark Clement  
Head of Safety and Assurance



# Community Scrutiny Panel

## Title: CFRS Misconduct & Complaints

**Date: 7 November 2024**

**Agenda Item No: 8 & 9**

**Originating Officer: Kristine Ward – Head of People and Talent**

**CC: Helen Clark and Jemma Taylor – HR Manager (job share)**

### **Executive Summary: (max 100 words)**

This report details the conduct, grievance and bullying and harassment cases of CFRS since the panel last considered conduct cases in November 2023. The panel have met to 'dip sample' the case files of all of the cases that have been closed during this time and have provided feedback on each of the cases.

### **1. Introduction & Background**

- Following disaggregation from Cumbria County Council, CFRS transferred over with the CCC policies and procedures. Since April 2023, the HR team have been reviewing these policies and procedures and engaging with Trade Unions to agree CFRS policies which are fit for purpose. Our policies are based on ACAS codes of practice and fair employment practices, however also need to encompass both operational and corporate staff members individual terms and conditions of service.
- The service launched the new Workplace Complaints procedure in September 2023, previously the service had been operating with separate policies for grievance and bullying and harassment.
- The service is currently operating with two separate disciplinary procedures (one for operational staff and one for corporate staff), the service are currently consulting on creating one disciplinary procedure for all staff, which also encompasses recommendations made by HMICFRS.
- The HR team are working through a suite of training for managers on application of HR policies and procedures, including conduct and workplace complaints
- The HR team currently complete a 'lessons learned' process at the end of each of the complex cases. One of the recommendations from the HMICFRS thematic misconduct report is that services should consider the use of a professional standards function therefore the service is currently considering future options in relation to this.

## 2. Current Statistics

Please note this information is correct as at 14.10.24 and only considers closed cases since October 2023

### Total Disciplinary Cases 13

### Total workplace complaints/ grievances/ bullying and harassment 3

2 members of the Community Scrutiny panel have dip sampled all 16 cases and have provided feedback.

#### Summary of cases

Case	Case Type	Outcome	Appeal?	Appeal outcome
1	Grievance	Partially Upheld	No	
2	Workplace Complaint	Progressed under separate procedure	No	
3	Workplace Complaint	Not upheld	No	
4	Disciplinary	No action taken	No	
5	Disciplinary	Dismissed	No	
6	Disciplinary	Dismissed	Yes	Dismissal upheld
7	Disciplinary	Written Warning	No	
8	Disciplinary	No action taken	No	
9	Disciplinary	No action taken	No	
10	Disciplinary	No action taken	No	
11	Disciplinary	No action taken	No	
12	Disciplinary	No action taken	No	
13	Disciplinary	No action taken	No	
14	Disciplinary	No action taken	No	
15	Disciplinary	No action taken	No	
16	Disciplinary	No action taken	No	

#### EDI Data

Our EDI data is self-reported via the HR system and has not been completed by everybody (gaps are shown as 'Not stated') therefore it is difficult to draw specific conclusions. Of the data that has been completed:

- 50% have stated a gender. Of those, 7 are male and one is non binary/ 3<sup>rd</sup> gender
- There is a split across the age profile, however most cases arose in the 40 – 50 age bracket
- Of the people that have specified an ethnicity, 100% of the cases were White British or Other White. This largely mirrors the data across the workforce as a whole
- 3 of the 16 have not stated whether or not they have a disability. Of the ones who have stated, only 1 has self-declared as disabled

#### Summary of reasons for raising grievances/ workplace complaints

- Pay and processing of ill health retirement application
- Inappropriate comments being made by a colleague
- Reasonable adjustment, equality act and development plan

#### Summary of allegations in disciplinary cases

- Not declaring secondary employment
- Being arrested
- Use of a service vehicle and inappropriate behaviour towards member of the public
- Inappropriate comments
- Failure to address inappropriate behaviour (2 cases)
- Conduct at a call-out (5 cases)
- External complaint about behaviour outside of work
- AWOL

### **3. Summary of Panel Feedback**

- The cases follow a clear process and are methodical. The electronic case files contain the relevant information for the panel to scrutinise and provide feedback on
- One of the cases involved both workplace complaint and disciplinary investigations for 3 separate individuals. This made the process more lengthy than would have been ideal. The files however were very comprehensive, particularly in relation to the investigation process
- 5 of the conduct cases were as a result of one complaint (complaint from an external individual about the behaviour of a crew). These cases all followed the same process at the same time and, although the outcome was the same for all of them, they were recorded as separate individual case files for each person.
- Good feedback was received from the panel on the quality of investigations (especially where an external investigator has been used)
- Good feedback on the use of a suspension risk assessment and the review process for suspensions
- Lessons learned have not been completed yet for all relevant cases (this is underway due to some of the cases only being closed very recently)
- There is not yet a way to record lessons learned within a 'system'

### **4. Future Developments**

- The service is currently consulting on having one disciplinary procedure which will be applicable to all staff
- Lessons learned are to be completed for some cases
- The service is investing in a new HR System which should improve the ability to record and report on outcomes and lessons learned
- Additional training for managers on holding hearings



# Community Scrutiny Panel

## Title: Recruitment and Promotions Board

**Date:**

**Agenda Item No: 10**

**Originating Officer: Orlanda Wright – Resourcing, Talent and Wellbeing Lead, Cumbria Fire and Rescue Service**

**CC: Kristine Ward – Head of People and Talent, Cumbria Fire and Rescue Service**

### Executive Summary:

The first part of this report details an overview of operational and corporate recruitment across 2024 so far and will provide the panel with an update on future recruitment processes planned for the next few months. The second part will share an update on the operational Promotion Boards that have been held in 2024, the feedback and reflection these processes, and improvements already implemented in the current On-Call Supervisory Manager Promotion Board. The goals throughout all the recruitment undertaken this year have been to improve diversity in the workforce, to progress the internal talent in the service, and to ensure we are removing barriers to opportunity regardless of the rank or role advertised. This is done against a national backdrop of an applicant led market and changes to the ways of working across all sectors, such as flexible working.

### 1. Corporate Recruitment Update

Following the disaggregation of the Fire Service from the local authority in 2023, centralised resourcing and HR recruitment admin were hosted services, provided by the unitary authorities. It was quickly identified that some of this work could be provided by the Cumbria Fire and Rescue Service's (CFRS) dedicated Resourcing and Talent team, specifically candidate attraction, the application process, assessment, and appointment.

Some of the initial changes the team were able to implement were:

- Dedicated Jobs pages on the CFRS external website.
- A refresh of the advert template and the CFRS 'offer' added to adverts.

- Inclusion of the Armed Forces Covenant Award, the Disability Confident Employer status, and the CFRS Equality statement on all adverts.
- A bespoke CFRS Application form, offered as a paper form initially, and now an online form.
- An anonymised shortlisting process.
- Flexibility with assessments.

The hosted HR and Admin service still completed pre-employment checks, on-boarding, and the issuing of contracts. With this being a hosted service, providing the function to the two unitary councils and the fire service, this caused some delays with getting CFRS recruits and new starters into post, so it was agreed that from May 2024, the hosted function of recruitment admin would be fully disaggregated, and the Resourcing team have picked up pre-employment checks, on—boarding, and issuing contracts since this date.

With the opportunity to disaggregate, the Resourcing team have reviewed the Resourcing and Talent policy, the process forms, and guidance documents, bringing them in line with the vision and values of CFRS and balancing the needs of operational and corporate recruitment across our service. Previously, policies and guidance had either been separated for operational and corporate information, or they were written with a predominantly corporate perspective, so weren't usable for the majority of CFRS managers. The team were pleased to have drafted a policy that united all employees and set standards for recruitment regardless of the role or the terms and conditions the role was in. The Resourcing and Talent Policy is due to go out for consultation very shortly.

This year so far we have advertised 24 corporate roles and of these, only three have been re-advertisements, and 15 roles have been appointed to (some roles are still going through the process but based on the number of applications and the quality of applications, we are confident appointments will be made). We are aware of a number of upcoming roles to advertise and have already begun to liaise with the recruiting managers to consider what support will be required.

## **2. Operational Recruitment Update**

As shared at previous panels, there has been considerable work put into the On-Call recruitment process, making it more accessible, streamlined, and aiming to reduce timescales from application to arriving on station. These changes have been detailed in Appendix A, for reference. Alongside On-Call recruitment, we have undertaken a Wholetime Firefighter recruitment course this year, and the 16 new recruits are currently on their Training Course, due to be arriving on stations in January 2025. Some key statistics about this course:

- Out of the 16 recruits, 6 are female identifying and 10 are male identifying.
- The ages of the recruits range from 18 to 45.
- 5 recruits were already On-Call Firefighters, 4 with CFRS and 1 with Scottish Fire and Rescue Service.
- 5 recruits have relocated to Cumbria to become Firefighters, and 7 recruits currently live and work in Cumbria and wanted to be a part of the local fire service.



- One recruit is Dyslexic and is currently utilising all support available to complete the training course.
- 14 of the recruits stated their nationality was White British, 1 stated their nationality as Mixed English/Asian (the terminology they used on their personal details form), and another stated their nationality as German.

We also brought across a competent Firefighter from Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue Service, who had applied through this process as they were keen to join CFRS.

We achieved these course statistics through: anonymised shortlisting stages, removing bias so the panel weren't driven by equality statistics when selecting the highest performing candidates; through holding a number of specific engagement sessions where CFRS staff talked about their experiences, including two female Firefighters, and two operational managers who are Dyslexic; having inclusive practical selection days where candidates could select from two different fitness assessments to complete; and finally we placed emphasis on assessing the culture and values of CFRS in our interview stages.

Reflecting on the process, we have identified some areas where we can remove further barriers in our Wholetime process, such as:

- Working with our external provider when delivering the Online National Assessments, consisting of a Behavioural Questionnaire, a Situational Judgement Test, and three National tests (Numerical, Verbal, and Mechanical) and expanding the offer for Neurodiverse and Dyslexic candidates.
- Working with identified minority communities in local areas to bring the recruitment engagement to their spaces, rather than always expecting interested candidates to have the confidence to walk into a fire station.
- Offering more taster sessions on station, where interested candidates can meet staff and ask direct questions about the role, as well as have a go at some alternative practical activities (none that will be on the assessment day). These were cancelled due to the weather and potentially did impact application numbers from certain areas in Cumbria.
- Utilise the most recent newly trained recruits to shape the next process; ask for their feedback and experiences, to ensure we are balancing the service requirements with the candidate experience, which in turn supports CFRS national reputation.
- Continue to seek the latest information and updates on both a local and national scale for Wholetime recruitment, allowing CFRS to use modern and inclusive practices and be a lead for Wholetime recruitment.

### **3. Promotion Board Update**

CFRS is committed to developing its internal talent, and since January 2024, we have undertaken the below Promotion Boards:

Group Manager	External and Internal applications	15 applications, 8 external applications	Currently 1 permanent promotion and 4 temporary promotions from this process
Area Manager	Internal Only	3 applications	Currently 2 permanent promotions and 1 temporary promotion from this process
Supervisory Manager (Crew Manager and Watch Manager)	Internal Only	41 applications for Crew Manager, 23 applications for Watch Manager, and 6 applications where candidates wanted to apply for both roles	Currently: 7 permanent Watch Manager promotions and 4 temporary Watch Manager promotions. 7 permanent Crew Manager promotions and 9 temporary Crew Manager promotions.
Station Manager	Internal Only	14 applications	Currently 5 permanent promotions and 2 temporary promotions from this process.
On-Call Supervisory Manager (Crew Manager and Watch Manager)	Internal Only	39 applications	Assessments are being undertaken currently.

Currently, the process for a Promotion Board requires an applicant to:

1. Apply for the role, and complete supporting information that has included questions based on the NFCC Leadership Framework and the CFRS Core Code of Ethics (varied depending on role).
2. Attend the virtual engagement sessions, hosted as standard for all CFRS processes now (not compulsory).
3. Anonymised shortlisting, completed by a panel made up of different roles, ranks, and genders.
4. Assessments, including Technical Interviews, various panel interviews, and Drill Yard assessments. These have been utilised depending on the role.
5. Benchmarking into a pool. We currently have three pools for candidates who complete a promotion board:
  - a. Green pool – where a candidate has hit the benchmark required to be eligible for permanent and temporary promotions.
  - b. Amber pool - where a candidate has hit the benchmark required to be eligible for temporary promotions.
  - c. Red pool – the candidate is not eligible for promotion, and if they would like support to achieve a higher pool in a future process, a development plan is implemented.

Once the pools have been confirmed, the Workforce Development Group reviews the vacancies across the service and, considering candidate preferences where possible, makes appointments. These pools stay live until the next process is undertaken, usually within the next 12 months.

Following the Supervisory Manager Promotion Board in April 2024, despite having excellent internal engagement in the process and a substantial number of appointments being made, it was identified that there were still a significant number of Crew and Watch Manager vacancies across On-Call stations, as well as several stations where personnel were 'acting-up' into the manager roles on a temporary basis. It was key for the Resourcing team and Service Delivery to address this, both by engaging with these On-Call stations to review why crews didn't apply in the most recent process and to ensure anyone acting-up could be promoted on, hopefully, a permanent basis, giving them the recognition and rank they deserved after supporting the service.

A Station Manager sought out feedback from employees who didn't apply and collated the information, finding the below barriers to applying:

- The application process seemed arduous and time-consuming for On-Call staff to undertake, whilst also balancing their substantive work and home life.
- Engagement sessions weren't always at times suitable for On-Call staff.
- Assessments were held on Wholetime stations, during the day, meaning many On-Call staff had to book leave and travel the length of the county to attend.
- Drill Yard assessments were done using Wholetime personnel, which intimidated On-Call staff who have less access and time to practising drills.
- A general lack of confidence in both the process and the On-Call staff's ability to complete it; many said they felt they wouldn't be able to perform well at an interview, so they didn't apply.

Following this, the Station Manager wrote a paper and took this to Workforce Development Group, where it was decided a second Supervisory Manager promotion board would be held, with the below changes in place:

- The process would be open to internal On-Call staff only.
- A bespoke application form was created, which was quicker to complete, and the supporting information questions had an On-Call focus, as opposed to the previous application form that asked 4 questions based on the NFCC Leadership Framework.
- Numerous engagement sessions were put on in evenings, and all On-Call station lecture rooms were invited, so candidates could just turn up to their local station and attend from there, removing any technical worries as well.
- Assessment days are currently happening at On-Call stations across the county, and being held from 12:00pm to 20:00pm to allow On-Call staff to attend outside of their other commitments:

- Two days at Ulverston Blue Light Hub (both On-Call and Wholetime)
  - Maryport On-Call Station
  - Bootle On-Call Station
  - Brampton On-Call Station
- Drill Assessments have currently been supported by a mixture of On-Call and Wholetime firefighters, including developing firefighters, as well as On-Call Support Crew Managers and Station Managers. This has removed some of the intimidation some candidates felt when attending Wholetime stations and working with Wholetime crews.
  - Interview questions all have an On-Call focus, enabling candidates to talk with passion about their stations and personnel.
  - Hopefully confidence is slowly being restored in the process; candidates have been made to feel as comfortable as possible, and the interview panel has been briefed on the expectations, removing any bias that may have existed around On-Call staff's performance at interviews.
  - Transparency and openness have been offered throughout the process, including the engagement sessions, the dedicated jobs page with key information added and made available throughout the process (not taken down once the advert closed), and the key management running the process have been visible and accessible to talk to. Station Managers have also done excellent engagement with staff to support them for the process.

This process will be completed mid-November, when candidates will be told their Pool outcome and Workforce Development Group can make further appointments. It's key we go back to candidates who applied and gather further feedback, as well as being vocal about the changes already made to support our On-Call staff. The success of the process not only supports the service with promotions and developing internal talent, but it also shapes the culture of promotion boards: we are a large service with a one team mindset, and when confidence is lost in processes, this has a large impact, however we are genuinely motivated to continue to make further progress.

Appendix A – On-Call Firefighter Recruitment - Current implemented changes (from April 2024 report).

Stage of Process	Previous Process (2023)	New Process (2024)	Initial Feedback
Timeline of process	<p>The 2023 process began in Jan 2023, with Engagement sessions taking place throughout Feb/March and the application window opening for a 1-month period (March).</p> <p>Following applying in March, successful candidates were allocated to a training course, the first being in September 2023.</p>	<p>The 2024 process began in Jan 2024 with two clear distinctions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The application window would be open all year round (no closing date as such)</li> <li>2. Candidates applying before a much advertised 'cut off' date (Sunday 3<sup>rd</sup> March) were informed they were being developed for the June 2024 training course, offering a quicker process.</li> </ol>	<p>Having the application window open all year round has allowed us to identify areas with low application areas much faster and implement additional advertising and engagement for these stations.</p> <p>However, having a quicker process has meant that if a candidate has missed any part of the process, we have not been able to facilitate support for them to continue. For example, if a candidate who couldn't attend one of the two practical selection days, we aren't able to organise another date for them.</p>
Advert opening and closing date	<p>Advert opened the beginning of March 2023 and was open for 1 month. Applications submitted after this point were not considered.</p>	<p>The On-Call advert opened Jan 30<sup>th</sup>, 2024, and has remained open since, allowing candidates to register interest as and when suitable for them.</p> <p>The service published the training course 'cut-off' dates</p>	<p>The relationship we have been able to build with candidates has been incredibly positive and it is fostering a supportive and inclusive process.</p>

		<p>and candidates we reassured that if they had missed the date for the June 2024 training course, their application would be reviewed and considered for the Nov 2024 training course.</p> <p>This means we can keep candidates 'warm' and engaged, and we can be transparent with our timelines.</p>	
<p>Engagement</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Social media advertising</li> <li>- On-Call web page with national information and resources</li> <li>- in-person engagement sessions and 'Have-A-Go' days</li> <li>- candidates invited to drill nights.</li> </ul> <p>Also, the crews leafletting in local areas of the On-Call station.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Increased use of social media advertising, including On-Call branding being created so any On-Call content on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and eventually TikTok will be instantly identifiable.</li> <li>- Updated dedicated web page with detailed information.</li> <li>- Both in-person and virtual engagement sessions held, allowing wider accessibility for candidates, and hopefully removing perceived restricted access to the</li> </ul>	<p>The engagement the resourcing team has done has had an incredibly positive impact across the service, as On-Call stations are feeling more involved and prioritised when seeing social media posts advertising On-Call recruitment.</p> <p>Future activity will include attending events across the summer period and handing out flyers/interacting with the public. We have also planned some news pieces in collaboration with our Comms officer.</p>

		<p>service (hopefully we have seemed much more supportive and approachable, building on on-going culture work across the service)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 'Have-A-Go' Days and open drill assessments held as usual.</li> <li>- Local leafletting/on foot recruitment undertaken by crews as usual.</li> </ul>	
Collaborative Working	<p>For 2023, the dedicated resourcing team started in May 2023 when the process was passed the initial stages. Although there was some strong teamwork, there was a noticed gap in information going between Station Managers and the resourcing team, and this impacted the information the candidate had. It caused some confusion for candidates and inconsistency in messages. One example was a training course being promised to a candidate by a Station Manager, and the resourcing team already filling that course with other</p>	<p>Having a dedicated resourcing team has helped connect the stages of the process and there was clear establishment of the roles at the start of the process.</p> <p>The resourcing team were able to pick up communication with candidates earlier on, help facilitate the station evenings, deliver the virtual sessions, and have had much better oversight of the process. A member of the recruitment team also sat on interview panels to ensure consistency and offer an impartial perspective.</p>	<p>This has worked brilliantly so far, and the resourcing team want to build on this further by including Watch Managers in the process and comms. Having Watch Managers join the teams' channel would help take some pressure off Station Managers and allow the Watch Managers to also build relationships with candidates as well.</p>

	<p>candidates.</p> <p>This wasn't very frequent, but all stakeholders in the process agreed our aim for future processes was for everything to be communicated more effectively.</p>	<p>Having the resourcing team as the central function of the process has helped with comms to other services, such as Learning &amp; Development and Occupational Health.</p> <p>The resourcing team have also utilised technology and made a dedicated Microsoft Teams channel for all information On-Call recruitment to be shared on. This has been for Resourcing, Learning &amp; Development, Tech Services, and Operational Managers to use. Managers have also been able to ask any questions in this channel and receive a quicker response time.</p>	
Application Form & 124a	<p>Previously used the Council's online form and it required candidates to complete two attachments, which were often missed and required chasing from the Station Managers and recruiting team.</p> <p>The application form was</p>	<p>New registration form has been created – average completion time is 2 minutes.</p> <p>The information on the form is only viewable by the resourcing team and once completed, the candidate is contacted with information</p>	



	<p>generic and not fit for purpose and was sent to managers with all data attached.</p> <p>The 124a (availability) form was a paper form that candidates completed and either attached to their application without any Station Manager oversight/input, or sometimes it was handed in at station, needing to be scanned and sent across to the resourcing team.</p>	<p>on the next steps and upcoming engagement sessions to join.</p> <p>Once the 'cut off' date has passed, all eligible candidates are invited to a Recruitment Evening at their local station, where they meet the Station Manager and complete a 124a Form with support. This has helped with candidate comprehension of the 124a Form and allowed Station Managers to shortlist candidates sooner in the process, moving those with good availability forward and informing candidates who don't have the availability the station requires right now to stay in touch and apply again if their circumstances change.</p> <p>It has been a better experience for candidates, rather than receiving an email much later in the process to say they haven't been successful.</p>	
Mental Agility Test	Handwritten test, completed	Moved to an online Mental	

	<p>by candidates when they arrived for their Practical Selection Days and marked by assessors that day. This required a full day out to be taken by candidates.</p>	<p>Agility Test, facilitated by Microsoft forms.</p> <p>This form was timed, accessible via a link sent directly to candidates, closed once the deadline had passed, and had automated scoring, so outcomes could be delivered much quicker.</p>	
Practical Selection Days	<p>4 days held across 4 weeks.</p> <p>Held at stations across the county. This helped candidates from local areas attend the one nearest to them, rather than have to travel too far.</p> <p>Candidates had to attend a full day session that included a fitness test, mental agility written test, and six practical assessments.</p> <p>Candidates were offered a Bleep Test, and if they stopped the test in the development levels (7 – 8.7), they were offered an alternative fitness test, the Chester Treadmill Test. This meant the process became</p>	<p>2 days held consecutively.</p> <p>Held in the same location for consistency of equipment and facilities.</p> <p>Offered afternoon and evening slots for candidates to help work around commitments and reduce the need to book time off/leave to attend.</p> <p>Following the Wholetime process, candidates were offered either a Chester Treadmill Fitness Test or a Bleep Test, which they had to pass on the day. The development levels were removed.</p>	<p>Having only two days for Practical selection days put considerable pressure on the resourcing team, however it improved the candidate experience.</p> <p>However as mentioned already, only having two days meant that any candidate unable to attend had to end their process for the June 2024 course. For future processes, we would like to offer more days, including some weekend days, to be even more supportive for candidates.</p> <p>Feedback from the 2023 process was about inconsistencies with scoring across the Practical</p>

	longer and it caused some negative feedback from internal staff.		Selection Days, but by holding two days in the same location, and with the same assessors, consistency of scoring was improved.
Interviews	Station Managers organised the interviews for their stations, and they had a 4-week period to complete these in.	<p>We had two days for interviews, and they were virtual. Candidates could dial in from work or home, and interviews were offered between 12pm and 7pm.</p> <p>The interview questions were reviewed to focus on the CFRS Code of Ethics and candidate understanding of the role of an On-Call Firefighter, such as work/life balance and resilience.</p> <p>A member of the resourcing team also attended the panel with the operational managers to challenge bias and support with consistency.</p>	<p>Offering virtual interviews was positively received by candidates and managers, as they allowed for flexibility and accessibility.</p> <p>Also, having the resourcing team on the panel encouraged discussion around what we can ask candidates and what it is important to consider with scoring.</p>
Eyesight Standards Testing	This form was given to candidates after they had a conditional offer and were	Eyesight Standards Forms were published on the dedicated web page, with	Giving the candidates the Eyesight Standards form sooner in the process than

	<p>booked in for a medical.</p> <p>Feedback from across the service was if a candidate failed their eyesight standards, it was too late in the process, and it would be much better to spot it sooner.</p>	<p>detailed information and a guidance document.</p> <p>Candidates were given this after submitting their application and being informed they were progressing for the June 2024 course, so we could pass this information to Occ Health sooner and identify unsuccessful candidates before the practical selection days and interviews.</p>	<p>usual has caused some confusion, and many candidates have not completed them until later stages any way.</p> <p>It has also caused some issues with the collecting of the forms and ensuring they are submitted to Occ Health, which we have addressed as a team, and we are looking for a securer way to complete this part of the process.</p>
<p>Training Course</p>	<p>The training courses in 2023 were delivered as 2-week courses, ran consecutively, and held in one location.</p> <p>This impacted candidates, as they had to book considerable time off work and make travel/lodging arrangements where necessary.</p> <p>It also meant the candidates had to undertake a huge amount of learning and assessment in this period.</p>	<p>The June 2024 training course is being held as below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>Induction</b> - 11th-12th June 2024</li> <li>- <b>Course part 1</b> - 15<sup>th</sup>, 16<sup>th</sup>, and 19<sup>th</sup> June</li> <li>- <b>Course part 2</b> - 29<sup>th</sup> June 30<sup>th</sup> June and 3<sup>rd</sup> July</li> <li>- <b>2-week BA course</b> - 15<sup>th</sup> - 26<sup>th</sup> July</li> <li>- <b>Mod 3 Water Rescue</b> - 10<sup>th</sup>, 11<sup>th</sup>, and 14<sup>th</sup> August</li> </ul> <p>This has been reviewed and created to utilise weekends and reduce the pressure on</p>	<p>The training course hasn't been completed yet, but a further review can be given when this is done.</p>

		<p>candidates to have to book off time from work. Also, by breaking up the course like the above, candidates should have more time on each training point and better processing of the information.</p>	
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# Community Scrutiny Panel Annual Work Programme 2025

Meeting Date:	Thursday 06 February 2025		Thursday 15 May 2025		Thursday 07 August 2025		Tuesday 04 November 2025	
	Conference Room 2 - Police @ 10.30 am Community Meeting Room, Fire @ 2.00 pm		Conference Room 2 - Police @ 10.30 am Community Meeting Room, Fire @ 2.00 pm		Conference Room 2 - Police @ 10.30 am Community Meeting Room, Fire @ 2.00 pm		Conference Room 1 - Police @ 10.30 am Conference Room 1, Fire @ 2.00 pm	
	Cumbria Constabulary	Cumbria Fire & Rescue Service	Cumbria Constabulary	Cumbria Fire & Rescue Service	Cumbria Constabulary	Cumbria Fire & Rescue Service	Cumbria Constabulary	Cumbria Fire & Rescue Service
<b>Thematic &amp; Dip Sample Sessions</b>	Use of Force, Stop & Search Custody Detention Scrutiny Vetting Decisions		* Public Complaint & Complaint Reviews * Misconduct – officer & staff discipline * Grievances * Use of Force, Stop & Search * Custody Detention Scrutiny	Misconduct Workforce Complaints  Employee Absences	Use of Force, Stop & Search Custody Detention Scrutiny Vetting Decisions	* DBS Checks  * Safe and Wellbeing visits - referral threshold, demographic of visits  * Secondary Employment	Public Complaint & Complaint Review files Misconduct – officer & staff discipline Grievances Use of Force, Stop & Search Custody Detention Scrutiny	Misconduct Workforce Complaints

## Regular Reports

<b>Corporate</b>	<b>CORPORATE UPDATE</b> To receive a briefing from DCC Martland and OPFCC Chief Executive Gill Shearer	<b>CORPORATE UPDATE</b> To receive a briefing from CFO and OPFCC Chief Executive Gill Shearer	<b>CORPORATE UPDATE</b> To receive a briefing from DCC Martland and OPFCC Chief Executive Gill Shearer	<b>CORPORATE UPDATE</b> To receive a briefing from CFO and OPFCC Chief Executive Gill Shearer	<b>CORPORATE UPDATE</b> To receive a briefing from DCC Martland and OPFCC Chief Executive Gill Shearer	<b>CORPORATE UPDATE</b> To receive a briefing from CFO and OPFCC Chief Executive Gill Shearer	<b>CORPORATE UPDATE</b> To receive a briefing from DCC Martland and OPFCC Chief Executive Gill Shearer	<b>CORPORATE UPDATE</b> To receive a briefing from CFO and OPFCC Chief Executive Gill Shearer
<b>Integrity</b>	<b>INTEGRITY</b> PSD report on - * Public complaints performance; * Officer and Staff Misconduct; and * ACU activities: * Files which are 12 months or over & every 6 months thereafter * Vetting	<b>DBS Checks</b> To receive an update report on the Fire Service's progress on continual DBS vetting for all personnel.	<b>INTEGRITY</b> PSD report on - * Public complaints performance; * Officer and Staff Misconduct; and * ACU activities: * Files which are 12 months or over & every 6 months thereafter * Vetting  Dip Sample Feedback	<b>MISCONDUCT, WORKFORCE COMPLAINTS REPORT</b> Including information regarding grievances, bullying, harassment and Employment Tribunal information.  <b>CODE OF ETHICS/CONDUCT</b> How this is being implemented and monitored through the organisation (NFCC)	<b>INTEGRITY</b> PSD report on - * Public complaints performance; * Officer and Staff Misconduct; and * ACU activities: * Files which are 12 months or over & every 6 months thereafter * Vetting	<b>DBS Checks</b> To receive a report on the Fire Service's progress on DBS vetting for all personnel.	<b>INTEGRITY</b> PSD report on - * Public complaints performance; * Officer and Staff Misconduct; and * ACU activities: * Files which are 12 months or over & every 6 months thereafter * Vetting  Dip Sample Feedback	<b>MISCONDUCT, WORKFORCE COMPLAINTS REPORT</b> Including information regarding grievances, bullying, harassment and Employment Tribunal information.  <b>CODE OF ETHICS/CONDUCT</b> How this is being implemented and monitored through the organisation (NFCC)
	<b>Stop &amp; Search, Use of Force and Custody Detention</b> Constabulary performance data re Stop and Search, Use of Force and Custody Detention	<b>INFORMATION MANAGEMENT COMPLIANCE:</b> To receive a report on Cumbria Fire & Rescue Service compliance with statutory legislation.	<b>Stop &amp; Search, Use of Force and Custody Detention</b> Constabulary performance data re Stop and Search, Use of Force and Custody Detention	<b>RECRUITMENT</b> Report from the Head of People and Talent on current recruitment process for on-call and whole time fire fighters.	<b>Stop &amp; Search, Use of Force and Custody Detention</b> Constabulary performance data re Stop and Search, Use of Force and Custody Detention	<b>INFORMATION MANAGEMENT COMPLIANCE:</b> To receive a report on Cumbria Fire & Rescue Service compliance with statutory legislation.	<b>Stop &amp; Search, Use of Force and Custody Detention</b> Constabulary performance data re Stop and Search, Use of Force and Custody Detention	<b>RECRUITMENT</b> Report from the Head of People and Talent on recruitment process for on-call and whole time fire fighters.
	<b>INFORMATION MANAGEMENT COMPLIANCE:</b> To receive a report on the Constabulary's compliance with statutory legislation	<b>CULTURE AND DIVERSITY</b> Equality, Diversity & Inclusion training - gain Panel feedback; Equality Impact Assessments; Culture and Values Board	<b>CIVIL CLAIMS:</b> To receive a report on Civil Claims to monitor any trends/issues and how learning/training has been implemented.	<b>CIVIL CLAIMS</b> To receive a report on Civil Claims to monitor any trends/issues and how learning/training has been implemented.	<b>INFORMATION MANAGEMENT COMPLIANCE:</b> To receive a report on the Constabulary's compliance with statutory legislation	<b>SECONDARY EMPLOYMENT</b> To receive a report on secondary employment of full time staff and feedback from the dip sample.	<b>CIVIL CLAIMS:</b> To receive a report on Civil Claims to monitor any trends/issues and how learning/training has been implemented.	<b>CIVIL CLAIMS</b> To receive a report on Civil Claims to monitor any trends/issues and how learning/training has been implemented.
	<b>CONSTABULARY PROPERTY STORE REVIEW</b> An update be provided on the work being carried out within the force	<b>SAFE &amp; WELL BEING VISITS</b> To receive a six monthly update report	<b>GRIEVANCES:</b> To receive a report on Grievances against the Constabulary identifying any trends or issues. Dip Sample Feedback	<b>EMPLOYEE ABSENCES:</b> Report on CFRS employee absence Feedback from dip sample session	<b>CONSTABULARY PROPERTY STORE REVIEW</b> An update be provided on the work being carried out within the force	<b>SAFE &amp; WELL BEING VISITS</b> To receive a six monthly update report	<b>GRIEVANCES:</b> To receive a report on Grievances against the Constabulary identifying any trends or issues. Dip Sample Feedback	
	<b>PSD Business Change</b> Update on current status of root and branch review, capacity, availability, systems and processes	<b>MENTAL HEALTH APP</b>	<b>DIP SAMPLE FEEDBACK:</b> Use of Force Stop & Search Custody Detention Scrutiny Vetting Decisions		<b>ANNUAL STOP &amp; SEARCH, USE OF FORCE REPORT and CUSTODY DETENTION SCRUTINY:</b> Annual Report		<b>DIP SAMPLE FEEDBACK:</b> Use of Force Stop & Search Custody Detention Scrutiny Vetting Decisions	
	<b>DIP SAMPLE FEEDBACK:</b> Use of Force, Stop & Search Custody Detention Scrutiny Vetting Decisions				<b>DIP SAMPLE FEEDBACK:</b> Use of Force, Stop & Search Custody Detention Scrutiny Vetting Decisions		<b>CODE OF ETHICS/CONDUCT – Constabulary</b> compliance to be included in the Integrity report	<b>Employee Absences</b> Report on CFRS employee absence
	<b>Mark 43</b> - data ethics integrity (HMICFRS Recommendations)							

## OPFCC Reports

	<b>OPFCC COMPLAINTS, REVIEWS &amp; QSPI:</b> Report on complaints and quality of service issues received by the OPFCC.				<b>OPFCC COMPLAINTS, REVIEWS &amp; QSPI:</b> Report on complaints and quality of service issues received by the OPFCC.		<b>ANNUAL WORK PROGRAMME:</b> Annual work programme for 2026 and meeting dates	
	<b>INFORMATION MANAGEMENT COMPLIANCE:</b> To receive a report on the OPFCC's compliance with statutory legislation				<b>INFORMATION MANAGEMENT COMPLIANCE:</b> To receive a report on the OPFCC's compliance with statutory legislation			
<b>Annual Report</b>	<b>PANEL ANNUAL REPORT:</b> To consider the annual report to be provided to the Commissioner on the work carried out by the Panel.							



# Community Scrutiny Panel

## Title: 2025 Work Programme & Meeting Dates

**Date: 21 October 2024**

**Agenda Item No: 12**

**Originating Officer: Joanne Head, Governance Manager**

**CC:**

### **Executive Summary:**

The Police, Fire & Crime Commissioner, Chief Constable and the Chief Fire Officer all wish to ensure high standards of integrity and ethical working within their respective organizations. In order to achieve that objective and provide openness and accountability to the public they have established the Community Scrutiny Panel.

### **Recommendation:**

That, the Panel considers and finalises the proposed work programme and meeting dates for 2025

#### **1. Introduction & Background**

- 1.1 The Community Scrutiny Panel meets on a quarterly basis throughout the year and an annual work programme is agreed to enable the Panel to fulfil its terms of reference and scrutiny role. The programme is managed to ensure wherever possible meetings are balanced in terms of volume of work and annual reviews are incorporated.
- 1.2 Meeting dates are set up to correspond with the reporting cycle of the Constabulary and Cumbria Fire and Rescue Service to ensure that reports contain the most up to date information possible.
- 1.3 In August 2024 the Panel changed to the Community Scrutiny Panel to enable both Cumbria Constabulary and Cumbria Fire and Rescue Service meet the Home Office aims to achieve a cohesive regime of community scrutiny processes nationally, whilst allowing Chief Constables and Police, Fire and Crime Commissioners discretion to apply them according to local crime and policing priorities, and community needs.

- 1.4 By changing the Panel's name to Community Scrutiny Panel would allow it to accurately reflect the Home Office proposals and assist in the public understanding the work carried out by the Panel.
- 1.5 Following each Panel meeting, the Commissioner's Executive Board meetings are updated on the Panel's oversight and scrutiny.

## **2. 2025 Work Programme**

- 2.1 In April 2023 the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner undertook responsibility for fire governance. As a result the Community Scrutiny Panel provides oversight and scrutiny for not only Cumbria Constabulary but also Cumbria Fire and Rescue Service.
- 2.2 The purpose of this joint independent Panel is to provide a forum that challenges, encourages and supports the Office of the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner, the Chief Constable of Cumbria Constabulary and the Chief Fire Officer of Cumbria Fire and Rescue Service in monitoring and dealing with integrity and ethical issues within these organisations and their public interactions.
- 2.3 Detailed within the attached work programme are the cyclical elements for the Panel and some proposals for Thematic Sessions based on current and future work; HMICFRS and IOPC inspection outcomes. The Panel Members, Cumbria Constabulary, Cumbria Fire and Rescue Service, and the OPFCC are invited to comment and make any suggestions for areas of business to review.
- 2.4 How such thematic sessions and reviews are undertaken would need to be agreed, ensuring that the panels work did not interfere with any ongoing or appeal processes; nor conflict or duplicate work already undertaken by the police or fire. The findings of the panel would be reported to the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner, Chief Constable and the Chief Fire Officer.
- 2.5 At the end of each calendar year, Panel provide an annual report to the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner on the work they have carried out during the year against their annual work programme. It identifies any issues or concerns they have found, and where learning has been recognized and implemented.

## **3. 2025 Meeting Dates**

- 3.1 When considering the meeting dates for 2025 thought has also been given to the dip sample sessions that the Panel members carry out in relation to police and fire areas of business. These are held approximately 1 – 2 weeks prior to the relevant Panel Meeting.
- 3.2 The proposed meeting dates for 2025 are:
  - ❖ Thursday 6 February 2025
  - ❖ Tuesday 6 May 2025
  - ❖ Thursday 7 August 2025
  - ❖ Tuesday 4 November 2024



- 3.3 The meetings for Cumbria Constabulary and Cumbria Fire and Rescue Service will be held separately but on the same day. This will enable the Community Scrutiny Panel members to manage their diaries and reduce the number of days they need to attend, taking into account the additional dip sample dates. The meetings will be held at both Cumbria Constabulary HQ and Cumbria Fire and Rescue Service meeting rooms.
- 3.4 Agenda setting meetings are held approximately 2 weeks following a meeting to discuss the agenda items for the next meeting and any actions identified. Appended to the report is a copy of the draft work programme and corresponding dip sample dates (Appendix 1)
- 3.5 The work programme and dip sample dates provide flexibility for any arising issues to be added and reviewed by the Panel. Any additional thematic sessions would be scheduled using existing dates or additional dates agreed throughout the year.

	Cumbria Constabulary					Cumbria Fire & Rescue Service	
Date & Time of Panel Meeting	Complaints & Misconduct	Grievances	Stop & Search Use of Force	Custody Detention Scrutiny	Vetting Decisions		
February - Thursday 6th (Conf Room 2) Police @ 10.30 am Fire @ 1.30 pm			30.01.2025 (Conf Room 3 OPFCC Mtg Rm)	30.01.2025 (Conf Room 3 OPFCC Mtg Rm)	30.01.2025 (Conf Room 3 OPFCC Mtg Rm)		
May - Tuesday 15th May (Conf Room 2) Police @ 10.30am Fire @ 1.30 pm	01.05.2025 @ 9.00am & @ 2.00 pm (PSD Offices)	01.05.2025 @ 4.00 pm (OPFCC Mtg Rm)	08.05.2025 @xxxx am (Conf Room 3 OPFCC Mtg Rm)	08.05.2025 @xxxx am (Conf Room 3 OPFCC Mtg Rm)		Misconduct & Workforce Complaints	Employee Absences
August - Thursday 7th (Conf Room 2) Police @ 10.30 am Fire @ 1.30 pm			24.07.2025 (Conf Room 3 OPFCC Mtg Rm)	24.07.2025 (Conf Room 3 OPFCC Mtg Rm)	24.07.2025 (Conf Room 3 OPFCC Mtg Rm)	DBS Secondary Employment	Safe & Wellbeing Visits
November - Thursday 7th (Conf Room 2) Police @ 10.30 am Fire @ 1.30 pm	30.10.2025 @ 9.00 am & @ 2.00 pm (PSD Offices)	30.10.2025 @ 4.00 pm (OPFCC Mtg Rm)	23.10.2025 (Conf Room 3 OPFCC Mtg Rm)	23.10.2025		Conduct and Workforce Complaints	Employee Absences

#### 4. Appendices

App 1 - 2025 Annual Work Programme and dip sample sessions