Office of the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner Carleton
Hall Penrith Cumbria CA10 2AU
Police, Fire & Crime Commissioner for Cumbria D Allen

Enquiries to: Mrs L Curran
Telephone: 01768 217734 (op2)

Our reference: LC

Date 10th June 2026

CUMBRIA POLICE, FIRE & CRIME COMMISSIONER'S PUBLIC ACCOUNTABILITY CONFERENCE

The Police and Crime Commissioner's Public Accountability Conference will take place on **Wednesday 17th June 2026** at **09:30.**

The purpose of the Conference is to enable the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner to hold the Chief Fire Officer to account for operational performance.

If you would like to join the meeting as a member of the public or press, please contact Louisa Curran on Louisa.Curran@cumbria.police.uk. Following the meeting papers will be uploaded on to the Commissioner's website.

G Shearer
Chief Executive

Attendees:

Police, Fire & Crime Commissioner	-	Mr David Allen (Chair)
OPFCC Chief Executive	-	Ms Gill Shearer
OPFCC Chief Finance Officer	-	Mr Steven Tickner
Temporary Chief Fire Officer	-	Mr Ben Ryder

AGENDA

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

1. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

2. **URGENT BUSINESS AND EXCLUSION OF 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.

3. **QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC**
   An opportunity (not exceeding 20 minutes) to deal with any questions which have been provided in writing within at least three clear working days before the meeting date to the Chief Executive.

4. **DISCLOSURE OF PERSONAL INTERESTS**
   Attendees 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 should not participate in a discussion of the matter and must withdraw from the room unless a dispensation has previously been obtained.

5. **MINUTES OF MEETING**
   To receive and approve the minutes of the Public Accountability Conference held on 12th February 2026.

6. **END OF YEAR PERFORMANCE**
   To receive a report detailing the Fire & Rescue Service's end of year performance position for 2025-26.

7. **GRENFELL INQUIRY (PHASE 2) NFCC AUDIT REPORT**
   To provide an overview of the service's progress in addressing the recommendations from the Grenfell Inquiry Phase 2 report, following an external audit carried out by the National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC).

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CUMBRIA POLICE, FIRE & CRIME COMMISSIONER'S PUBLIC ACCOUNTABILITY CONFERENCE

The Police and Crime Commissioner's Public Accountability Conference took place on **Thursday 12 February 2026**, at **13.00.**

The purpose of the Conference is to enable the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner to hold the Chief Fire Officer to account for operational performance.

Attendees:

Police, Fire & Crime Commissioner	- Mr David Allen (Chair)
OPFCC Chief Executive	- Ms Gill Shearer
Finance Lead	- Mr Kieran Timmins
Chief Fire Officer	- Mr Paul Hancock

AGENDA

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

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

- The Chair led a round of introductions
- Apologies were received from Steven Tickner.

2. URGENT BUSINESS AND EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

- No urgent business nor items requiring the exclusion of the press and public were noted.

3. QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

- No questions had been received from the public in advance of the meeting.

4. DISCLOSURE OF PERSONAL INTERESTS

- No personal interests were declared by attendees of the meeting.

5. MINUTES OF MEETING

- The minutes of the previous meeting on 5th November 2025 were agreed as an accurate record and approved by the Chair.
- No actions had arisen from the previous meeting.

6. DECISION PAPERS – CAPITAL STRATEGY 2026/27

- **A) Capital Strategy 2026/27**
- The Service outlined investment in four priority areas: appliances, stations, IT, and firefighting equipment, totalling £18m over the next two years, funded through borrowing.
- All recommendations were approved.
- It was noted that the level of borrowing requires close monitoring, and elements of the 2026/27 capital programme have been re-phased into future years to reduce pressure on reserves.

- **B) Treasury Management Strategy 2026/27**
- The technical review confirmed that the level of borrowing is affordable and prudent, with the Treasury Management Strategy set on a highly cautious basis.
- Members were asked to approve the borrowing, investment and prudential indicators, alongside the Minimum Revenue Provision Statement, and a number of technical approvals.
- Treasury management responsibilities remain delegated to the Chief Finance Officer.
- Recommendations A–G were approved, and the item will be forwarded to the Joint Audit Committee (JAC).

7. DECISION PAPERS - BUDGET AND MEDIUM-TERM FINANCIAL FORECAST 2026/2027 to 2030/2031.

To receive, note and approve the Budget and Medium-Term Financial Forecast reports:

A) BUDGET 2026/27 AND FINANCIAL FORECASTS 2027/28 TO 2030/31

- Members received an update on the business rates collection fund, noting a net £19k deficit due to a deficit from Westmorland & Furness and a surplus from Cumberland. The final Local Government Settlement confirmed a funding floor enabling a £5 council tax flexibility, resulting in an additional £100k for Cumbria, with both elements proposed to be reflected in reserves.
- The report highlighted the continued financial challenges facing the Service. A Band D council tax level of £103.14 was proposed, consistent with government expectations. Members were advised of pressures including pay inflation, a reduced tax base across the unitaries (linked to second-home usage and property changes), and a £1.5m budget gap in 2027/28, which is expected to reduce over the medium term.
- The report had previously been reviewed by the Panel, which was supportive of the proposed increase. No questions were raised. Members noted ongoing concerns regarding the national settlement and the intention to continue lobbying.
- Recommendations to approve the revenue and capital budgets were endorsed. The CFO confirmed the budgets were robust, and the Finance Lead concurred with the assessment.
-

B) CHARGING REPORT 2026/27

- Members received the annual Charging Report outlining the basis for charges applied for cross-border services and special service requests, aligned with national best practice across Fire and Rescue Services.
- All recommendations were approved.

8. PERFORMANCE

- The Service reported that, following HMICFRS feedback, response time targets had been adjusted to provide a more realistic benchmark. The Service achieved its targets over the nine-month period, with an average response time of 9:48 for whole-time crews and 13:12 for On-Call staff. January figures were 9:17 and 13:27 respectively.
- An update was provided on the introduction of PRIME, aimed at improving engagement during the recruitment process to reduce drop-off rates and support retention. Early feedback from crews has been positive, and further performance data will be brought back to a future meeting.
- The Risk Based Inspection Programme (RBIP) for high-risk premises continues to be delivered, with the previous three-year programme achieving 86.5% completion. A new RBIP began in January using updated data and intelligence. Some data issues relating to Civica software are being addressed and remain under review, but delivery remains on target. Staffing levels in Protection are stable, with manual monitoring in place to ensure continued statutory compliance.

- The Service achieved 6.7% for Commercial False Alarms, outperforming the 10% target.
- Commercial Fires have been above expected levels for three months; analysis is under way using Greater Manchester's statistical methodology to determine whether these represent genuine outliers. Targeted prevention work has taken place in Ulverston and Barrow, including joint operations with local partners and focused business engagement.
- Compliance against statutory building and licensing regulations remains strong, with 95% and 100% achieved over the last nine months.
- Compared to last year, the overall number of fires has increased by 35.3%, largely due to hot weather and increased wildfires earlier in the year. National trends linked to climate change indicate that such incidents are likely to continue. The Service is planning a series of upcoming public awareness campaigns, including water safety, wildfire prevention, and outdoor fire safety, aligned with NFCC national campaigns.
- There has been a 7.3% reduction in accidental primary dwelling fires.
- The Service has completed 5,545 Home Fire Safety Visits (HFSVs) against an annual target of 8,000, with 70% delivered to individuals meeting the Home Office definition of vulnerability. Work continues to increase delivery through On-Call staff, who receive training and quality assurance oversight. It was noted that 20 high-risk cases have been waiting over six months due to high referral levels, and this remains an area of focus.
- Domestic false alarms remain stable at 21.6%, slightly improved from 22.3% in the previous year.
- Water rescues have reduced by 3%, and non-fire incidents have increased by 2% over the comparable period.
- Staff wellbeing continues to be monitored closely. Against a target of 6% sickness, the last nine months showed 6.9% for Wholetime, 4.1% for On-Call, and 4.0% for Corporate staff. Significant work is underway to improve data quality, including investment in Power BI dashboards, auditing of IRS data and participation in NFCC-supported improvements ahead of the national transition to the new FARDAP system.
- Processes for addressing data quality issues and responding to any deterioration in performance were outlined, with actions to be considered through SLT and supported via the DDaT programme.
- Absence case details will be reviewed at the PSD & Legal Board in March.

9. FIRE CADETS

- Members received an overview of the current Fire Cadets programme based at Workington and the Service's plans to establish four new units in Barrow, Carlisle, Millom and Whitehaven in March 2026. The programme supports CFRS strategic priorities by developing young people's life skills, confidence and leadership, while also creating a potential pathway into future Service recruitment.

- Thirteen cadets currently attend weekly sessions covering hose running, ladder drills, basic firefighting skills, and fire, road and water safety education. Sessions are delivered by Adult Cadet Volunteer Instructors (ACVIs), made up of serving firefighters and external volunteers. Thirty-seven volunteers are currently progressing through DBS checks and onboarding to ensure sufficient instructor capacity across all five units, supported by contingency arrangements through prevention and operational staff. A standardised NFCC curriculum, mandatory training and programme reviews will ensure consistency of delivery across all units.
- Cadets engage in a wide range of community activities including station visits, charity events, local festivals and fundraising activities. They also benefit from regional and national opportunities through Youth Voice and NFCC Fire Cadets forums.
- CFRS's £62,000 allocation from the Uniformed Youth Fund is supporting the reinvigoration of Workington and establishment of the four new units, including procurement of uniforms and firefighting equipment, training, and enhancement of digital educational resources. Sponsorship opportunities with industry partners such as Sellafield, BAE and Pirelli are being explored, with discretionary activities able to be scaled back if required to maintain financial resilience.
- A coordinated promotional approach is being taken with schools, parents and community partners, and the programme remains free of charge to ensure accessibility. Safeguarding remains a central priority, with all instructors undergoing enhanced DBS checks and safer recruitment processes. Assurance was provided that all mandatory checks and training will be completed before launch, supported by dedicated HR staff.
- The Service is committed to retaining cadets through varied practical sessions, strong communication, leadership opportunities and tailored support for cadets with SEND, including flexible pacing, quiet spaces and person-centred adjustments. Each unit gathers regular feedback from cadets to ensure continuous improvement.
- The long-term impact of the programme will be evaluated through tracking individual development, collecting feedback from cadets and families, and monitoring wider community outcomes. The PFCC requested an end-of-year progress report for EB Fire to support future promotion and funding opportunities.
- Members recognised the positive effect of early intervention on young people's life choices and expressed strong support for the programme, while noting the importance of long-term funding sustainability. The high number of CFRS staff volunteering as ACVIs was welcomed as a positive reflection of Service culture. Broader community impact will be monitored through engagement levels, safety outcomes and partnership working, including links with the Local Resilience Forum, which is exploring additional resilience opportunities in Millom.

Public Accountability Conference

Meeting Date:	Wednesday 17th June
Agenda Item:	x
Report of:	Head of Planning and Improvement

CFRS end of year performance 2025/26

Purpose of the Report

1. To provide the end of year performance position for the service against a set of agreed indicators and expand on the level of false alarms, and special service calls in Cumbria

Recommendation

2. That the Commissioner:

    a. notes the content of the report.

Background

1.2 In April 2023, the Police Fire and Crime Commissioner (PFCC) took up his role as the Cumbria Commissioner Fire and Rescue Authority, replacing the County Council as the Fire Authority. This year also saw the start of the process to create the Services new Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP).

1.3 These events created an opportunity for the Service to review our Performance Management Framework and performance measures. The main aim of which was to align the new measures against the priorities of the Fire and National Framework for England and His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabularies and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) reporting requirements.

1.4 Following this review a core suite of indicators was created and subsequently agreed by the PFCC. This suite of indicators provides HMICFRS with the information they need, and also provides reassurance to the PFCC, the Strategic Leadership team (SLT) and the public that the Service is delivering against the objectives set out in the CRMP.

2. Detail

2.1 A detailed table that illustrates end of year performance is included at Appendix A. Where possible valid comparisons have been made to the latest regional or national data, although this may not necessarily have been updated until the end of the financial year. Commentary against each indicator is highlighted below.

Response

2.2 Following feedback from HMICFRS in 2024/25 the Service changed its approach to setting response targets to be more realistic. The target for the Service to respond to all fire incidents was set at 10 minutes, with a corresponding target of 15 minutes for our On-call staff. We have seen similar figures this year when compared to the previous financial year of 9.57 and 13.20 respectively, both within target.

2.3 When compared to the other 13 predominately rural services, the grouping Cumbria fits into according to the Home Office, this places us mid table.

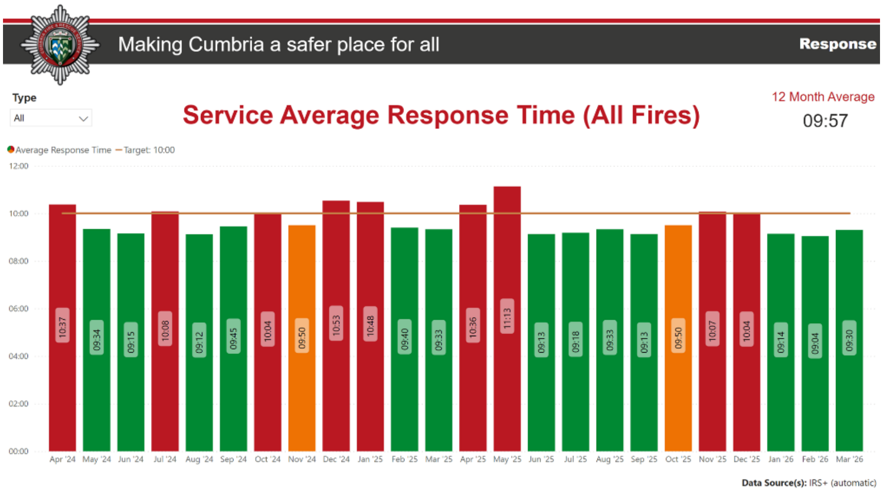
2.4 Our response times to incidents is impacted by the level of resource committed to existing incidents when new calls come in. In recent months the Service has dealt with several large concurrent incidents such as

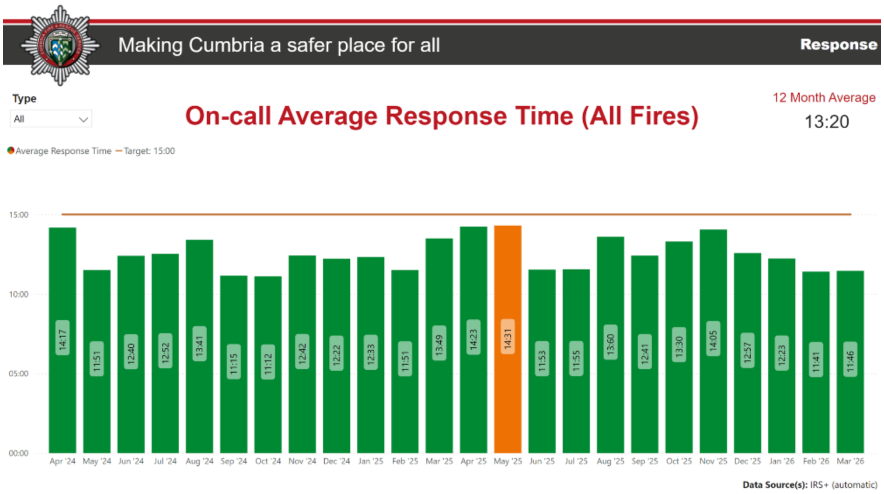
- A significant wildfire at Spadeadam at which we had 8 appliances, 2 officers and 4 specialist wildfire resources in attendance as well as a wildfire tactical advisor.

- A domestic property fire at which at the height of the incident a total of eight appliances, a turn table ladder, welfare unit, control unit, water bowser supported by two Station Managers and one Group Manager brought the incident under control.

- A fire at a waste plant where 8 Fire Appliances 32 crew members, plus two Station Managers were in attendance. At the same time a further incident involved 5 fire appliances 21 crew and a Station Manager, placing significant strain on Service resources.

2.5 Despite this the Service has achieved excellent performance as the charts below highlight



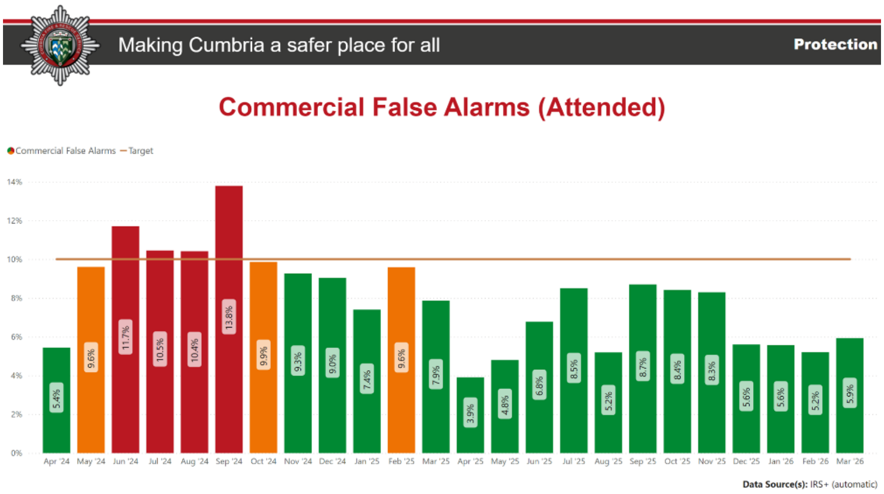


2.6 In terms of Service Availability, the Service has always had a target of 90%. In the current climate this is particularly challenging as all Services with an On-call cohort are seeing a drop off in availability. Nevertheless, Cumbria's figures rank it in the top 50% of its comparators with a Service availability of 80.0% and an On-call availability of 76.0%.

Protection

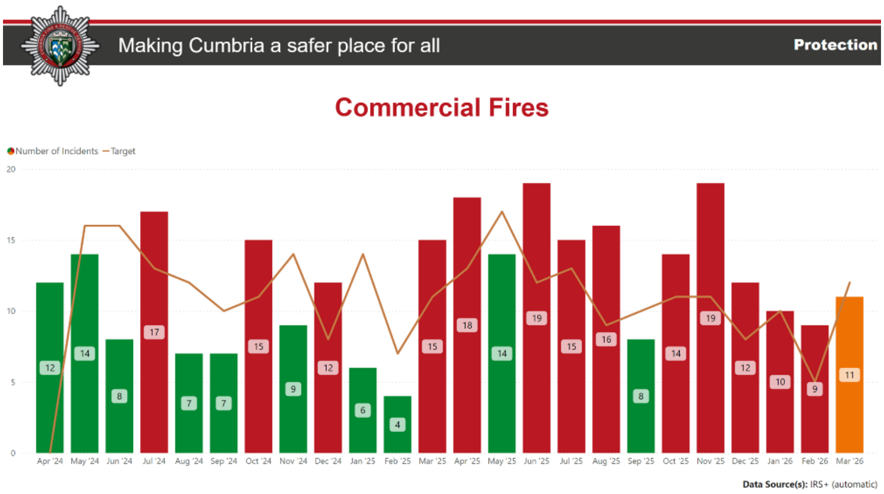
2.7 One of the key drivers of performance of the protection team is the delivery of the Risk Based Inspection Programme (RBIP). The aim is to complete the RBIP within a three year period. In the last financial year the Service delivered 410 high risk audits against a target of 551. The Service is confident that recent changes in the structure of the protection team will allow the whole of the RBIP to be delivered on time.

2.8 Two of the drivers of activity within the Protection team are the number of false alarms that occur and the total number of commercial fires. With regard to false alarms, the Service set itself a challenging target of 10% and achieved this with a figure of 6.4%, a significant reduction on the previous year. A detailed breakdown of false alarms is included at appendix A.

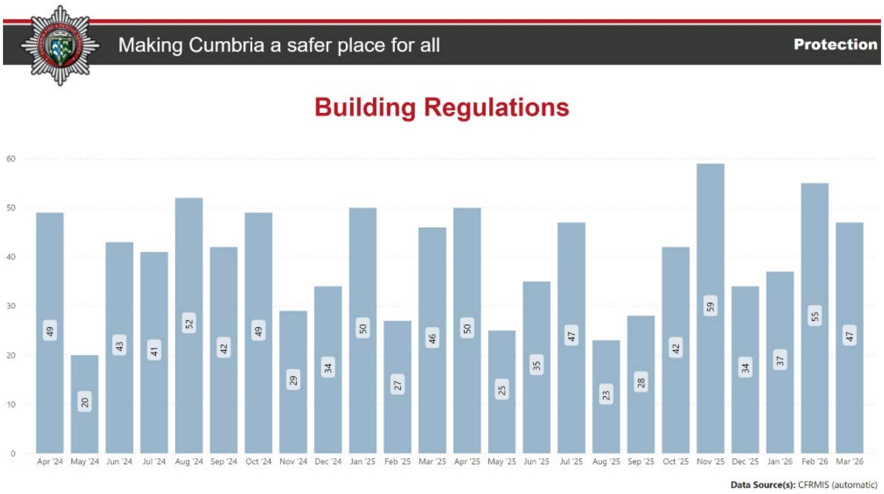


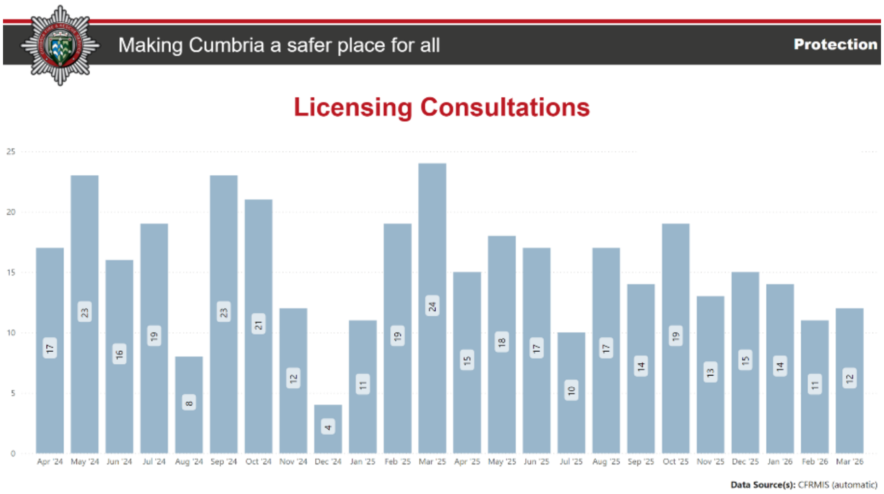
2.9 This has been achieved by identifying repeat offenders and working with them to raise awareness and identifying improvements in process.

2.10 Over the last twelve months we have seen a significant increase (26.2%) in the number of commercial fires in Cumbria, as illustrated by the chart below. This has been driven by a series of Anti Social Behaviour Hotspots. The Service has worked in partnership with the police and local authorities to deliver targeted interventions in these areas, which has led to a reduction in fires towards the latter part of the year.



2.11 Two of the statutory functions the Protection team deliver against are building and licencing regulations. Due to the statutory nature of this work, the Service has set itself the target of 95% compliance, and in the last financial year has achieved figures of 97.9% and 99.4% respectively. Continuing to achieve the targets, coupled with the significant increases we have seen in demand is an excellent example of how the Service is delivering increased productivity.



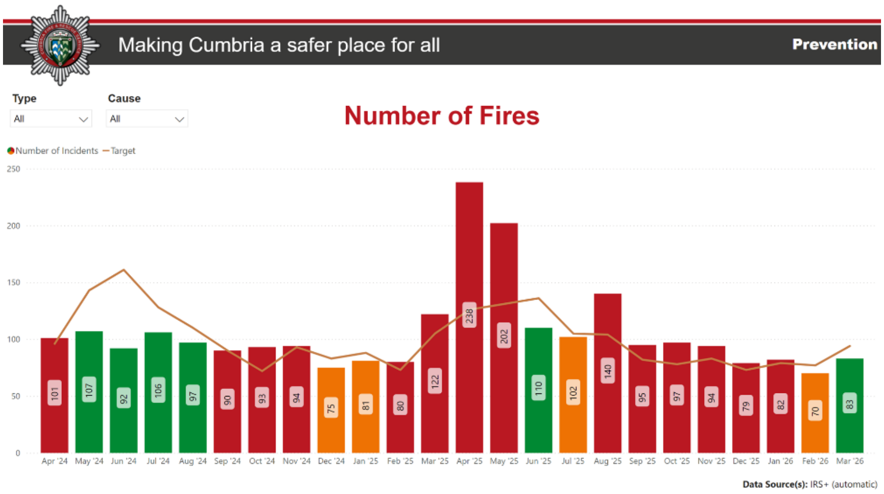


Prevention

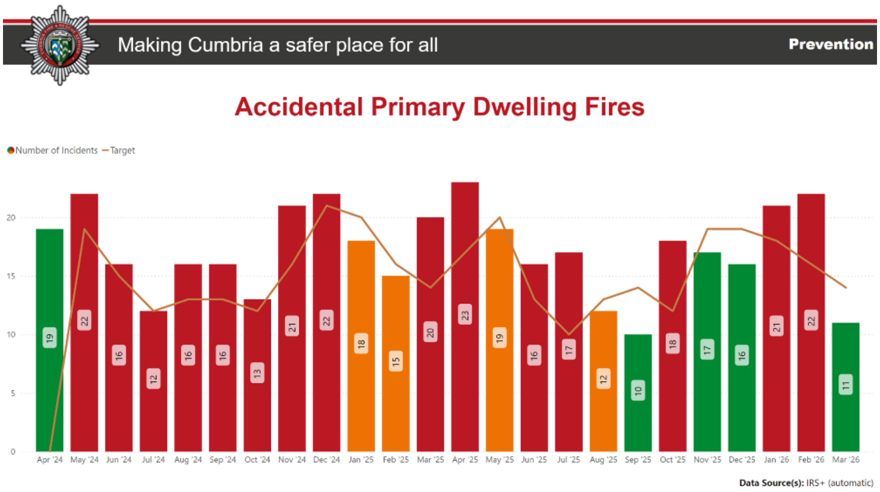
2.12 Overall, in Cumbria over the last twelve months, we have seen a 22.3% increase in the level of fires. This has been largely driven by the warm weather at the beginning of the year, and a large number of wildfires.

2.13 The governments chronic risk analysis has identified that climate change will impact on extreme weather events. This chronic risk has a direct relationship with acute risks e.g. global warming and will make extreme weather events more prevalent.

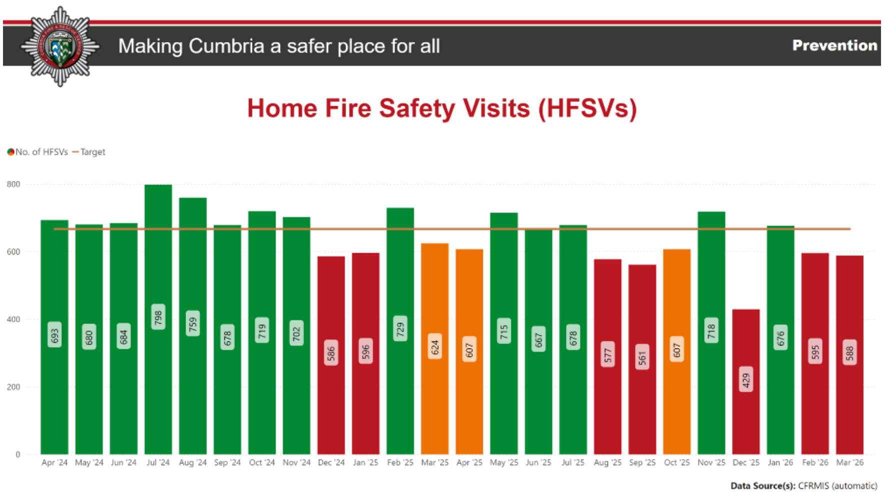
2.14 The public safety messaging delivered through the work of the Prevention Team and the community engagement work we carry out as a Service has contributed towards the reduction in fires we have seen in the last few months of the year.



2.15 Despite the overall increase, targeted prevention activity, an effective communication strategy and community engagement has contributed towards a reduction in accidental primary dwelling fires of 3.8%.



2.16 The primary activity of the prevention team is to deliver Home Fire Safety Visits targeted at the most vulnerable households in Cumbria. In the last twelve months, we delivered 7317 , below our target of 8000.



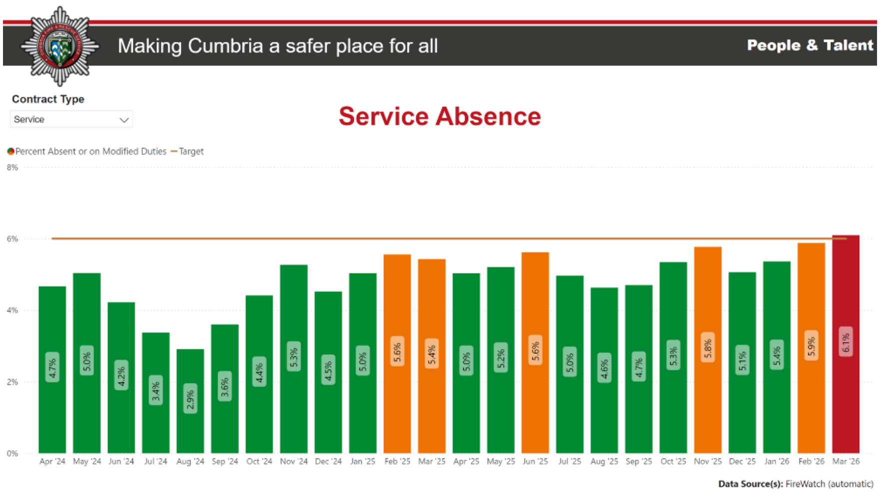
2.17 As previously mentioned, it is vital that our visits are delivered to vulnerable individuals. Using the Home Office definition, we know that 69% of our visits meet these criteria, of being either elderly or disabled. The remainder of our visits are referrals from partner agencies where despite not meeting the home office definition we would still consider the individuals to be high risk. For example, they may have drug or alcohol dependency issues or other factors which increase their fire risk.

2.18 Whilst we do not have a target, we do monitor how many false alarms we have in domestic properties. Currently this is running at 21.8% the same as the previous year.

2.19 At the beginning of the year, the Service did monitor several other incident types, those being Road Traffic Collisions, Water Rescues and Non-Fire incidents. With regard to Water Rescues and Non-Fire incidents no targets were set. Over the last twelve months we have seen a 2.9% reduction in the number of water rescues and a 1.0% reduction in non-fire incidents, for example the work we do in partnership with NWAS helping them gain entry to properties. A detailed breakdown of special service calls is included at appendix B.

2.20 In regard to RTCs, to enable more informed decisions to be taken a six monthly report is now developed using the more robust constabulary data and shared throughout the Service. We are also part of a partnership road safety group. We developed a road safety leaflet targeting young/new drivers working which was picked up nationally and shared by Road Safety GB.

2.21 Throughout the Service, the wellbeing of staff is paramount to the delivery of a first-class service to the people of Cumbria. To that end, we constantly monitor sickness levels across the organisation against a target of 6%. Over the last twelve months, sickness levels for the Wholetime, On-Call and Corporate staff have run at a monthly average of 6.9%, 4.3% and 5.1% respectively. The chart below illustrates the combined monthly sickness levels.



2.19 Absence levels are regularly monitored and exceptions discussed at all levels within Service. Proactive management of long term absence, focused on the health of the individual has led to a downward trend in overall absence levels.

3. Issues for Consideration

3.1 Within the Service, Performance is not considered in isolation. Every month the SLT review the latest data, and the Head of Safety and Assurance reviews the underlying data. If there are any emerging trends or anomalies that need to be addressed, then action can be taken.

3.2 In the next financial year a number of issues will impact on the reporting of performance. We know that through the NFCC there is a significant amount of work to do on data quality. In addition there have been some changes in indicator definitions that we need to follow through and we need to consider setting more realistic targets that reflect the current position of the Service

4. Conclusion

4.1 Performance data is a valuable tool in helping to shape service delivery within Cumbria. Service performance when considered holistically is in a good place, and in those areas where an intervention has been required, the subsequent delivery has seen an upturn in the Service position, which in turn ensures an improved service to the people of Cumbria.

Financial Implications

5. There are no financial implications associated with this report.

Legal Implications

6. There are no legal implications arising from this report.

Risk Implications

7. There are no risk implications associated with this report.

HR and Equality Implications

8. There are no human resources or equality implications arising from this report.

Procurement Implications

9. There are no procurement implications associated with this report.

DDaT Implications

10. There are no DDaT implications associated with this report.

Appendix A – False Alarms

1. Approach to false alarms

1.1 A false alarm, or unwanted fire signal (UWFS), is an activation of a fire alarm system that does not result from a genuine fire.

1.2 Under the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004, fire and rescue authorities must:

- Make provision for fire-fighting and rescuing people
- Decide how those services are delivered locally (risk-based approach)

The Act does not say fire services must attend every alarm activation, genuine or false. Instead, it allows services to set local attendance and mobilising policies, including how to handle false alarms and automatic fire alarms (AFAs).

1.3 Fire services always treat alarm activations as real until proven otherwise, because:

- They cannot know it's false at the time of call
- Failure to attend a genuine fire could risk life and lead to serious legal consequences

As a result, all false alarms are responded to in good faith, especially where:

- People might be sleeping
- There are vulnerable occupants
- There is any report of smoke, fire, or investigation not yet completed

This approach is consistent across England, supported by national policy guidance and Home Office research

1.4 Fire services may legally choose not to attend certain false alarms, particularly:

- Automatic fire alarms in non-domestic buildings
- No sleeping risk
- No confirmation of fire
- Repeated unwanted fire signals from the same premises

1.5 Fire services can legally charge for persistent false alarms:

- Applies mainly to non-domestic premises
- Based on powers in the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004 (as amended)
- Used when alarms are poorly maintained or badly managed

Domestic premises are normally exempt, and charging is intended as a last resort after warnings and engagement

1.6 Within Cumbria approximately 39% of our incidents (1909) are false alarms. Of that total, 53% are due to apparatus, 45% are with good intent and 2% are malicious. Our false alarms per 1000 population figure of 3.6 is well below the national average of 4.3.

1.7 The service has procedures in place for false alarms at commercial premises. We have a robust call challenge process in place with NWFC, and every false alarm is reviewed by a member of the protection team. If there are multiple false alarms at a specific location then the team will engage with the premises and carry out a full fire audit. Currently 8 locations are being audited as a result of this approach.

1.8 This approach is robust and has resulted in Cumbria being in the top 10 services countrywide for dealing with this type of incident.

1.9 With regard to domestic false alarms, due to the obvious risks the default position will be for the Service to attend.

Appendix B – Special Service Calls

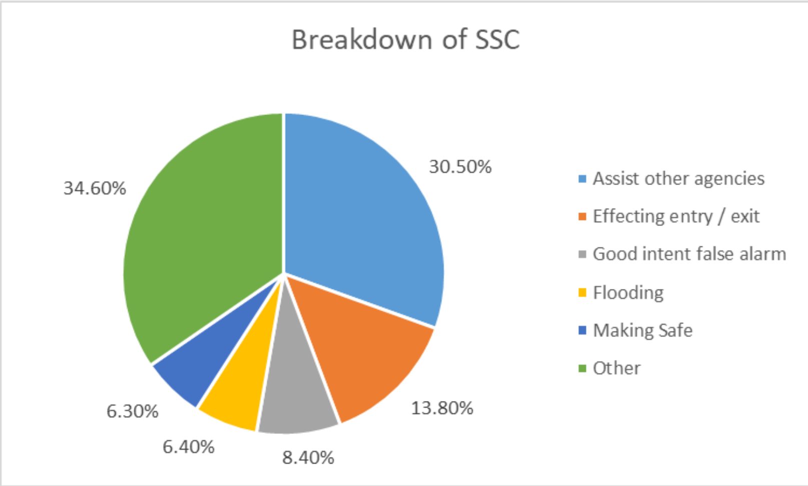
1 Definition of a special service call

1.1 In legislation, a Special Service Call (SSC) for fire and rescue services is defined as a non-fire, non-road traffic accident incident where personnel and equipment are used, often involving emergencies with a threat to life, environment, or a need for humanitarian assistance. These are statutory duties under Section 9 of the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004 and can be either emergency or non-emergency, with certain types potentially attracting charges.

1.2 Examples of this type of call are shown below

- **Medical Incidents & Emergency Assistance:** Assisting other emergency services (ambulance/police) with medical emergencies, such as resuscitation or accessing patients, including bariatric patient removal.
- **Water Rescue and Flooding:**
- Rescuing individuals from water (floods, rivers, lakes) or protecting property from flooding.
- **Hazardous Materials (Hazmat):** Incidents involving leaks, spills, or contamination of toxic substances (e.g., ammonia, chemicals, gas) that threaten life, health, or the environment.
- **Rescue from Height or Depth:** Rescuing individuals trapped at height, in confined spaces, or in collapsed structures.
- **Animal Rescue:** Assisting in the rescue of animals, often in cooperation with the RSPCA for smaller animals, or direct intervention for larger animals like horses or cattle.
- **Making Safe (Dangerous Structures):** Securing unstable buildings, walls, or roofs that pose an immediate risk to the public.
- **Effecting Entry or Exit:** Assisting in accessing locked premises, often for medical emergencies where a person is locked in or out, or where someone is stuck in a lift.
- **Humanitarian Assistance:** Other requests that promote welfare, such as assisting with mental health crises (e.g., in coordination with police regarding suicide attempts).

1.3 Approximately one third of all service calls (1800) fit into the Special Service Call category, and Special Service calls can be further broken down as follows. A further more detailed, historic breakdown is shown at the end of the report.



1.4 This level of Special Service calls per head of population is the 13th highest in the country, although it is below the national average.

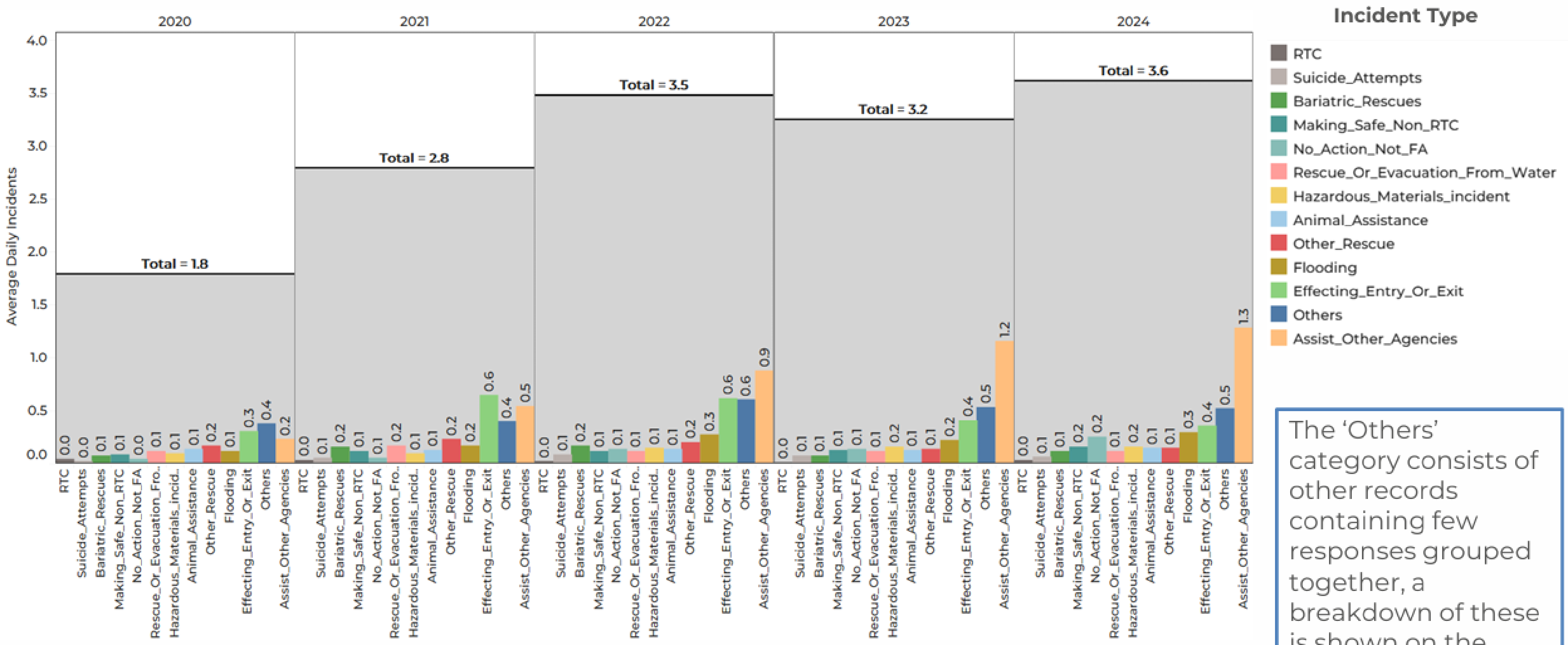
1.5 As might be expected the highest proportion of calls occur in the wholetime station areas. The top three station areas are

- Barrow
- Carlisle East
- Whitehaven

1.6 Fire and rescue services must not charge for emergency response, but may charge for certain non-emergency "special services", provided they only recover costs and do not make a profit. This power comes from the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004 and the Fire and Rescue Services (England) Order 2004.

1.7 An analysis of a sample of Special Service Calls has recently been carried out by a suitably experienced Station Manager to identify the potential for generating income. Of 229 calls responded to by CFRS over a twelve month period, only one would have been actually chargeable, and would have generated an income of approx. £500. If this were extrapolated to cover the Service as a whole, then in a twelve month period approximately £4k would be generated.

Average Daily Demand: Other Special Service Type (1)



The 'Others' category consists of other records containing few responses grouped together, a breakdown of these is shown on the following slide

Public Accountability Conference

Meeting Date: Wednesday 17th June 2026

Agenda Item:

Report of: Group Manager Owen McCarney

Grenfell Inquiry (Phase 2) NFCC Audit Report

Purpose of Report

1. To provide an overview of the service's progress in addressing the recommendations from the Grenfell Inquiry Phase 2 report, following an external audit carried out by the National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC).

Recommendation

2. That the Commissioner:

   a. notes the content of the NFCC audit report, progress made against the Phase 2 recommendations.

Background

3. Following the fire in Grenfell Tower on 14 June 2017, the government commissioned a public inquiry, which was conducted in two phases i.e. Phase 1 and Phase 2.

4. Subsequent reports were published; the Phase 1 report was published on 30 October 2019, and the Phase 2 report was published on 4 September 2024. The reports detail recommendations for public bodies and organisations, including fire and rescue services.

5. In response, the service established a multi-departmental approach to address the reports' recommendations. A principal officer was nominated as the strategic lead and a group manager was assigned responsibility for coordinating the service's action plan.

6. Progress and actions against the recommendations were — and continue — to be reported to the service's Operational Improvement Group (OIG).

7. CFRS progress with regards to actions noted in the Phase 2 report, have been externally audited by the NFCC in January 2026, and the findings, accompanied by a management action plan (Appendix 1) are detailed below.

Phase 2 Recommendations

8. There were 12 recommendations from the Phase 2 report:

- Five recommendations are for all fire and rescue services (FRS).
    - These recommendations covered the following areas:
        - Equipment and Resources
        - Guidance and Learning
        - Partnership Agreements
        - Risk Information
        - Organisational Learning

9. The other recommendations noted in the phase 2 report include, three recommendations aimed at His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS). As well as two recommendations for His Majesty's Government (HMG), one recommendation for the National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC), and one recommendation for the British Standards Institution (BSI).

10. The NFCC audit examined our progress against all areas of the recommendations for fire and rescue services, detailed above. Following input from multiple department heads, around these areas, the NFCC have produced a report (Appendix 1) and we have incorporated an managerial action plan that will be managed via the Organisational Improvement Group.

11. The suggested actions from the report are:

Action 1 – In Progress

Operational Training - Consider how the service can assure itself that training materials are fully aligned with Operational Guidance. This could include the completion of a training specification gap analysis, or a Training Strategy which includes a justification statement or articulates a methodology of how training is developed.

CFRS Managerial Action - By 31 March 2027, Learning and Development and Operational Assurance will complete and document a full gap analysis of all operational training materials against current National Operational Guidance (NOG), introduce a formal quality assurance and sign-off process for revised and new training packages, and produce a clear methodology statement showing how training design is informed by risk, guidance, and organisational learning. Progress will be evaluated through monthly Operational Improvement Group reviews, with any gaps prioritised, assigned, and tracked through to completion to provide robust and auditable assurance that training materials are aligned with NOG

Action Owner – L&D

Action 2 – In Progress

Partnership Agreements - Work is ongoing on a national level to encourage water providers to enter into MOUs with FRS.

CFRS Managerial Action - Within six months, Operational Planning will complete and document a review of all existing 13/16 arrangements across the northwest, confirm and will attempt to formalise Cumbria Fire and Rescue Service's agreed procedure with United Utilities for obtaining water supplies at incidents, and identify any gaps, risks, or actions required to ensure reliable access to realistic water supplies for operational response. Progress will be evaluated through monthly Operational Improvement Group reviews, with any gaps prioritised, assigned, and tracked through to completion to provide robust and auditable assurance that training materials are aligned with NOG

Action Owner – Operational Planning

Action 3 – Complete

Organisational Learning - Utilise Organisational Learning Good Practice Guide to support in the evolution of this function within service. Support in strengthening Organisational Learning is available via the implementation team.

CFRS Managerial Action - CFRS has reviewed the five principles outlined in the NFCC Organisational Learning Good Practice Guidance against current policies and procedures. We are satisfied that these requirements are being met; however, we recognise opportunities for further improvement.

A detailed review of each principle confirms the following:

1. Continuously evaluating its performance to ensure it remains efficient, effective and compliant with legislation and standards.

- All departments participate in the Organisational Improvement Group (OIG), which reviews learning from various sources, including internal and multi-agency debriefs, NOL, JOL, and Reg28 submissions. This process ensures ongoing assessment of efficiency, effectiveness, and compliance with legal and regulatory frameworks.

2. Identifying, capturing, evaluating and sharing learning which could benefit themselves and others, engaging with national learning arrangements, where they exist.

- The OIG facilitates the identification, evaluation, and dissemination of organisational learning across departments, supporting both local and national learning frameworks.

3. Have in place or have access to mechanisms which enable feedback from the community to be captured and responded to.

- CFRS provides multiple channels for community feedback, including surveys conducted for the CRMP and PFCC Plan. A formal complaints and compliments process is managed by the Information Governance Officer, ensuring appropriate handling and response. This process is currently under review to maintain its effectiveness.

4. Have in place or have access to mechanisms which enable feedback from employees to be captured and responded to.

- Staff are encouraged to contribute to organisational learning through established debriefing processes, including the submission of Form 219. This system is accessible to all employees, allows for anonymous input, and supports feedback where requested.

5. Using identified learning to tailor and improve what they deliver to the community.

- Organisational learning is integrated into improvement activities through the OIG. Additionally, the introduction of Significant Incident Reports (SIRs) enhances transparency by sharing key learning and actions from incidents and supports the embedding of improvements into operational practice

Action Owner – Operational Planning

Conclusion

12. The service has made significant progress in addressing all actions from the areas noted in the GTI Phase 2 report and are continually looking for opportunities to improve service delivery to the communities of Cumbria. Governance and oversight will continue to be provided by OIG.

Financial Implications

13. There are no financial implications associated with this report.

Legal Implications

14. There are no legal implications arising from this report.

Risk Implications

15. There are no risk implications associated with this report.

HR and Equality Implications

16. There are no human resources or equality implications arising from this report.

Procurement Implications

17. There are no procurement implications associated with this report.

DDaT Implications

18. There are no DDaT implications associated with this report

Grenfell Tower Inquiry Phase 2 Recommendations Assurance

Service	Cumbria FRS (CuFRS)
SPOC	Owen McCarney
ILM	Huw Coates
Surgery Date	22/01/2026

Introduction

This report reflects the responses, discussions, and observations gathered during the assurance workshop conducted by the NFCC's Implementation Team. It summarises the service's progress and identifies areas for further development in relation to the Phase 2 recommendations of the Grenfell Tower Inquiry. This session seeks to ensure services have embedded the recommendations into their wider governance structures, processes, and ways of working.

Workshop Attendees

Tony Paterson, Colin Wright, Martin Slack, Gemma Nelson, (NWFC), Paul Dean, Kasey Grainger, Mark Nicholson, Owen McCarney

Guidance and Training

CuFRS implemented National Operational Guidance as a specifically resourced project, delivering guidance documents aligned with the content of Operational Guidance and a well-designed technical platform to house and present the content. The approach to this and the 'Product Pack' methodology they utilised is recognised as good practice and has gained attention from other services seeking to replicate this.

There was confidence in the room that training materials are aligned to Operational Guidance, but there were acknowledged gaps in some of the supporting frameworks that assure this is the case. CuFRS does not currently utilise the training specifications that would demonstrate the granular adherence to Operational Guidance. However, they are confident that their Operational Assurance approaches – identified in a recent HMICFRS inspection as good practice – ensure that the guidance, training and application of guidance is appropriate and effective.

Specific to the Grenfell Tower Inquiry, CuFRS have undertaken 4 Immediate Building Evacuation, (IBE) exercises, testing their processes for relaying critical information on the incident ground and to North West Fire Control. Debriefs have been conducted on these, although these had not yet included feedback from Fire Control. A refresher plan is in place to ensure learning remains embedded.

Main Barriers to Implementation

Resourcing and capacity were identified, as well as competing priorities. In relation to the Grenfell Tower Inquiry, the high-rise footprint within Cumbria is very low. With limited resources and funding, other more pressing risks captured within their CRMP are understandably prioritised. The shared Fire Control also generates some issues around some of the recommendations, and decisions have been taken that balance out risk, resourcing and financial realities. For example, their method of recording information as part of an IBE procedure is seen as a long-term temporary solution, as more sophisticated means are cost prohibitive based on their risk profile.

Fire Control

CuFRS operate with a shared control room function that is outsourced to an external organisation, North West Fire Control. This arrangement provides some efficiencies and benefits around collaborative working but also generates some additional barriers to the implementation of all of the GTI recommendations.

NWFC has adopted the Multi Agency Incident Transfer (MAIT) system and has embedded the Operation Willowbeck procedure. Operational Guidance specific to Fire Control has been implemented, but some supporting functions such as training and operational assurance are still being developed.

NWFC are involved in debriefing of incidents and exercises with the four FRS they provide a function for. The degree to which they are included in these varies however, and physical proximity to some services renders face to face attendance problematic in some cases.

Main Barriers to Implementation

Fire Control is a limited resource with competing priorities. Work around Operational Assurance and Maintenance of Competence need time to embed and mature but should directly strengthen the embedding of GTI recommendations.

Risk Information

A robust approach was articulated as to the identification, gathering and recording of risk information in relation to section 7 2 (d) of the Fire Service Act. Use of risk information is embedded into operational response and tested during exercises and incident assurance. Specific risk information undergoes internal quality assurance processes, and significant risk sites are incorporated into service exercise schedules.

In terms of specific risk sites, Cumbria does not contain the sort of high rise risk profile that was the specific focus of the Grenfell Tower Inquiry, however it does still house considerable risk, most notably the Sellafield site. This site is treated separately from other risk premises, and unique roles are staffed to sit within Sellafield and ensure risk information is directly shared.

A potential area for further development was identified in the use of risk information during Incident Command training and assessment in the Command Suite. There was also an acknowledgment that technological improvements could be made to some of the systems in use in this area.

Main Barriers to Implementation

None identified beyond the above comments.

Partnership Agreements

CuFRS has a central record of existing partnerships, although there is no current MOU with their main water provider. Wider partnerships are monitored and evaluated, and training with non-blue light partners takes place, that United Utilities are occasional participants in. Partners, including United Utilities, are invited to take part in incident debriefs through the Local Resilience Forum.

Communication channels between water undertakers and NWFC are well embedded, however it was noted that some requests for specific resources, e.g. water tankers, have been declined by UU on the basis that no life was at risk.

Main Barriers to Implementation

Absence of Service Level Agreement or Memorandum of Understanding and wider resistance from UU to participate in FRS activities.

Incident Command

CuFRS provide in house training to all personnel wishing to 'act-up' into an Incident Command role. This is delivered by suitably qualified, accredited trainers within the Command Training team. L1 Command Training is not externally accredited, but all Incident Command qualifications from L2-L4 is, via Skills for Justice. Commanders receive ongoing CPD and are assessed every 21 months.

Main Barriers to Implementation

None identified.

Organisational Learning

CuFRS has a robust approach to the management of Operational Learning, which was acknowledged in the latest HMICFRS report as being significantly strengthened in recent years. There is a potential gap around broadening the approach used within operational response to include wider organisational learning. This is in keeping with the wider sector. Supporting resources are identified below.

Main Barriers to Implementation

Time and resources.

Summary of Findings

Cumbria Fire and Rescue Service (CUFRS) has made clear progress in addressing the Phase 2 Grenfell Tower Inquiry recommendations, embedding changes within existing governance, training, and assurance processes. Given that high-rise premises present a limited risk within the Service's Community Risk Management Plan, many of the recommendations relate to low-probability but high-impact events. CuFRS's approach reflects an understanding of the need for proportionality, balancing the implementation of these recommendations against competing operational demands and the realities of a smaller, capacity-constrained Service.

Suggested next steps

The following priorities were identified during discussion:

<table>
<tr><th colspan="2">Area</th><th colspan="2">Suggested action</th></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Operational Training</td><td colspan="2">Consider how the service can assure itself that training materials are fully aligned with Operational Guidance. This could include the completion of a training specification gap analysis, or a Training Strategy which includes a justification statement or articulates a methodology of how training is developed.</td></tr>
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Owner:	Operational Planning	Completion Date:	

Area	Suggested action
Organisational Learning	Utilise Organisational Learning Good Practice Guide to support in the evolution of this function within service. Support in strengthening Organisational Learning is available via the implementation team

CFRS Managerial Actions

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    - Organisational learning is integrated into improvement activities through the OIG. Additionally, the introduction of Significant Incident Reports (SIRs) enhances transparency by sharing key learning and actions from incidents and supports the embedding of improvements into operational practice.

Owner:	Operational Assurance	Completion Date:	07/05/2026