



CFRS Weekly Update – 20/3/26

Weekly Update – At a Glance

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- ▶ Fire Fighters Charity: Networking Event at Jubilee House – 26 March

**** Please note that the above information should be shared with all staff on parade.**

Detailed information for each of these headlines can be found below.



Risk Critical / Operational

On-Call Supervisory Manager Development Days

The service will be running four On-Call Supervisory Manager Development Days in April. These days will provide new and existing on-call managers with the information they need to carry out their role. The sessions will include input on absence management, Gartan payroll, PDRpro completion, and IRS completion.

Please see the dates, venues, and times below:

- ▶ **Saturday 18 April – Workington 9.30am–2.30pm**
- ▶ **Thursday 23 April – Carlisle East 4pm–8.30pm**
- ▶ **Saturday 25 April – Ulverston 9.30am–2.30pm**
- ▶ **Wednesday 29 April – Kendal 4pm–8.30pm**

These events are open to all on-call managers, with at least one representative from each station expected to attend. All LCU Managers are also expected to attend at least one event. Please book on to one of these dates via PDRpro.

If you have any questions, please contact Martin Slack (Martin.Slack@cumbriafire.gov.uk) or Jamie Coward (Jamie.Coward@cumbriafire.gov.uk) for further details.

Martin Slack

Group Manager – Service Delivery, Cumberland

Long-serving Crew Manager retires after more than two and a half decades



Current and former colleagues of Crew Manager Marc Sadler gathered at Maryport Fire Station this week to bid a fond farewell as he retires after 26 years of committed service.

Marc was presented with his commemorative axe by Station Manager Kevin Vannet in recognition of more than two decades of dedication to protecting people and property.

Thank you for your many years of service Marc, and enjoy your retirement!

Outcomes of comprehensive spending review

Following the comprehensive spending review, and in light of the financial challenges currently facing the fire and rescue sector, it is important that the service looks carefully at where we can identify efficiencies, make savings and explore smarter ways of working. This will help us manage the pressures ahead and ensure we can continue to protect our communities as safely and effectively as possible.

We recognise that this will not be easy. However, our clear priority is to protect frontline response and maintain the long-term financial stability of the service. At the same time, it remains both our aspiration and that of the Commissioner to continue investing in and rebuilding operational resource capacity where it is feasible to do so, ensuring the service remains resilient and capable of meeting the risk within our communities.

As part of this work, we will initially be looking at non-staffing expenditure. This could include opportunities to collaborate or share services with other organisations, reviewing contracts or purchasing goods and equipment in ways that help reduce costs, such as bulk buying where appropriate.

Heads of departments have been asked to bring forward potential savings proposals which will be considered by a panel. A final set of proposals will then be reported to the Finance and Efficiencies Board for review before being presented to the Commissioner via Executive Board – Fire at the end of next month.

These challenges are not unique to Cumbria. Fire and rescue services across the country are facing similar pressures, largely driven by reductions in government funding, an issue which we and the National Fire Chiefs Council continue to raise nationally.

Alongside this structured work, we would really welcome ideas and suggestions from across the service. If you feel there are opportunities within your team or department to do things differently, reduce costs or work more efficiently, please email your ideas with 'Suggestions' at the beginning of the subject line to

BusinessSupport@cumbriafire.gov.uk these ideas can be considered as part of the proposals.

We appreciate that discussions about savings can create uncertainty or anxiety, and it is important to acknowledge that openly. However, we are confident that by working together, listening to one another and drawing on the strong culture and values that define our service, we will be able to identify the efficiencies and savings required while continuing to deliver the service our communities rely on.

Thank you in advance of your support, ideas and continued commitment.

Service Leadership Team

**Business Continuity arrangements – Industrial action reminder
(Operational Staff only)**

Quick gentle reminder to complete the survey when you have a moment. Your response really helps the service with business continuity planning.

Link: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/ZZPYGK6> or please scan the QR code:



Thank you to those who have already responded.

Jemma Taylor and Helen Clark

HR Managers

Organisational Learning from Manchester and Cheshire FRS

Please be aware that these case studies are from other services and their policies and procedures will differ from Cumbria Fire & Rescue Service.

Please see the link below to take you to the February Organisational Learning Brief from Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue Service.

This edition includes learning on:

- ▶ Lithium-ion battery risks following a narrowboat explosion
- ▶ The rising number of lithium-ion battery fires
- ▶ Thermal image camera use during BA operations
- ▶ An LGV overturning into a canal, highlighting environmental protection and multi-agency working
- ▶ A new Culture in Focus section

Greater Manchester FRS: [February OLB](#)

We are also pleased to share February's Monthly Learning Brief from Cheshire Fire & Rescue Service, which brings together key operational learning, case studies, safety reminders, and updates from across the service.

In this month's issue, you will find:

- ▶ High Volume Pump (HVP)
- ▶ Rynet Court – Recommendation Update
- ▶ Releasing contaminated crews
- ▶ Utilising other pumps for functional roles
- ▶ BA pre-entry check
- ▶ Solar Panel Incident – Widnes
- ▶ Attending incidents with Highways on the motorway
- ▶ Fend Off
- ▶ Cross-Border Incident Case Study
- ▶ Success Strategies for Neurodivergent Learners – IFE
- ▶ Operational Guidance and Platforms App Updates

Cheshire FRS: [Operational Monthly Learning – February 2026 | Rise 360](#)

Kasey Grainger

Station Manager – Operational Planning

Support research to improve working conditions for women in fire

I am a final-year student at the University of Wolverhampton conducting dissertation research on the safety and ergonomic impacts of PPE fit on female firefighters compared to their male counterparts.

Despite the importance of properly fitting gear, data on the specific challenges faced by women in the service remains limited. I am seeking your assistance in sharing my short, anonymous survey with your Women's Network or female operational staff.

The goal of this study is to highlight the necessity of custom-fitted clothing to improve safety and performance. The survey takes less than five minutes to complete. The privacy of the participants is important and all participants can withdraw at any point and the evidence will be deleted. The data obtained from this project will be deleted on the day of my graduation.

Closing date is Friday 10 April to ensure I have enough time to analyse my findings and write up my dissertation.

Survey link: <https://app.onlinesurveys.jisc.ac.uk/s/uow-survey/ppe-survey>

Thank you for supporting research that aims to improve the working conditions of women in the fire service.

Lilia Gibrat

University of Wolverhampton student

Penrith HQ Stores two-week closure

The Technical and Fleet Services department will be closing the Fire Service Stores function for two weeks. It will be closed from Monday 23 March and re-opening on Tuesday 7 April. This is to support the annual end-of-year stock check.

Please continue to raise any requests and defects in the normal way; however, be aware that only urgent / critical items will be dealt with during the two-week closure.

Resilience fire kit will be sent out daily at 10am through internal mail.

If you have any comments or concerns regarding the provision of equipment and PPE during this period, please raise with your Service Delivery Station Manager in the first instance.

Apologies for any inconvenience caused.

Technical and Fleet Services department



Vacancies

Face Fit Tester

Salary: £34,434–£35,412 pro rata

Hours: 15 hours per week

Contract: Permanent

Location: Countywide remit – work base to be agreed at the point of recruitment / nearest wholetime fire station

Closing date: Tuesday 31 March 2026

Interviews: Interviews will be held during the week commencing Monday 13 April 2026

This post requires a Standard DBS Check

Find out more and apply: [CFRS0175 - Face Fit Tester | Cumbria Fire & Rescue Service](#)

Watch Manager Opportunity – Technical & Fleet Services (Fixed Term)

INTERNAL ONLY

This is a six-month fixed term opportunity to assist the Technical and Fleet Services department in the delivery of fleet base project work.

The role will be based at Penrith HQ and is open to current Watch Managers, as well as those eligible for promotion to WM.

For further information about the role, please contact SM Jonny Wills

Jonathan.Wills@cumbriafire.gov.uk or GM Tony Paterson

Tony.Paterson@cumbriafire.gov.uk

To apply: [Internal Expressions of Interest | Cumbria Fire & Rescue Service](#)

Closing Date: Tuesday 31 March 2026, 11.59pm

Location: CFRS HQ Penrith



Other

Fire Fighters Charity: Carlisle car wash a joint effort between crew and cadets

Crew held a car wash in aid of the Fire Fighters Charity at Carlisle East Fire Station on Sunday. We had a steady stream of vehicles all day and, with the help of some of the Fire Cadets, we managed to raise £655.

Given the fact that the weather wasn't good and Carlisle East got an emergency call with the turntable ladder, the crews worked hard alongside the cadets and I am really pleased with everyone's efforts.

Without the cadets we really would have struggled so I would like to extend my thanks to them.

Marcus Woof

Watch Manager – Red Watch, Carlisle East and West

Meet our new-look in-house Occupational Health team

Gayle Carruthers



I will be the Occupational Health Advisor Nurse, responsible for the day-to-day running of the service. My main focus will be management referrals and fitness for work assessments. I will be working alongside our two nurses, Wendy and Sarah, who will lead on medicals and pre-employment assessments.

I began working in healthcare more than 30 years ago, starting in my uncle's residential home before progressing into nurse training. After qualifying, I joined the Coronary Care Unit at the Cumberland Infirmary as a nurse. I led a nurse-led clinic for cardioversion and atrial fibrillation. I served on the hospital cardiac arrest team for 10 years, worked on the emergency PPCI (heart attack) team in the heart centre for five years, and have experience across acute medicine, A&E and critical care.

In 2016 I moved into Occupational Health and gained extensive experience in pre-employment assessments, medicals, and fitness for work referrals within the fire and rescue service. I studied to degree level in Occupational Health.

I am excited to work solely with the fire service, delivering a bespoke and forward-thinking Occupational Health service. Although we are a small team, we can now be more focused, responsive, and dedicated to restoring a strong sense of being well supported and looked after.

Wendy Charlton



I've been a qualified nurse for more than 30 years, and during that time I've had the privilege of working in a variety of roles across both the NHS and the private sector. Each role has taught me something different.

I specialised in occupational health five years ago and can't imagine doing anything else now. It's an area I'm truly passionate about – helping people stay healthy at work and supporting organisations to create environments where their teams can thrive.

I'm very much looking forward to joining CFRS and being part of a team that continues to grow and develop the service. It's an exciting opportunity, and I'm keen to contribute my experience.

Outside of work, I enjoy spending time with my family and travelling whenever I get the chance. We've recently booked a cruise, so I'm definitely looking forward to a bit of sunshine and relaxation in the near future.

Sarah Harrison



I've been nursing for more than 30 years (so I've pretty much seen it all!), and for the past 15 years I've been in occupational health helping people stay healthy, safe, and fit for work.

For the past five years, I've worked with CFRS alongside the council and I'm really looking forward to working solely with the service and being part of the team.

I'm really passionate about supporting the health and wellbeing of those on the frontline, helping ensure teams are fit, safe, and ready for duty, while also promoting both physical and mental wellbeing.

When I'm not working, you'll find me keeping active at Warrior Wellness classes, heading off on walking holidays with friends, or out and about with my sprocker spaniel, Ollie – who definitely makes sure I get my steps in!

Melissa Taggart



I joined CFRS in August 2024 in a temporary maternity cover post within HR and Pensions, having previously worked in Business Support in Safeguarding Adults at Cumberland Council. From early on I knew I wanted to continue my career within the service.

Outside of work, I adore walking my two labradors and taking part in 10k road races.

Last year I went along to a Women in the Fire Service event where I got the chance to 'have a go' at some of the firefighter activities. It was great fun and definitely gave me a new appreciation for just how tough the role is! While I enjoyed trying it out for the day, it did confirm that my skills and strengths are probably better suited to the corporate side of the service.

I'm looking forward to welcoming you all to the Occupational Health department and supporting you where we can.

Cumbria firefighters secure top-three finish in annual netball tournament

A team of wholetime and on-call firefighters from Cumbria Fire & Rescue Service went down to Manchester on Saturday 14 March to compete in an annual netball tournament in celebration of International Women's Day, competing against seven other services from across the country.



Going down with a team of eight women and needing seven for a game we knew we were going to have to work hard. Matches were won and lost and we ended up coming away with third place after a close play-off match!

I'm super proud of everyone that came to play, especially with only three practice sessions held at Carlisle East Fire Station before the tournament.



Hopefully this is just the beginning of Cumbria's netball team as we are hoping to start a monthly session going forward.

If you would like to get involved please email me at Kim.Berry@cumbria.gov.uk

Kim Berry

Firefighter – Blue Watch, Carlisle West

Pensions team station drop-in clinics

The Pension Team will be running pensions drop-ins at stations across the county to give you the opportunity to meet us face to face to ask any questions you may have in relation to Pensions (purely on a factual basis, no advice will be given) or if you need help logging onto PensionPoint, etc.

The sessions will be drop-ins – there is no need to book – and there is no obligation to come and see us but we will be on station for two hours for each session.

Cumbria Fire & Rescue Service

Meet the team at our...

Pensions drop-in clinics

Our Pensions team is hitting the road and visiting stations around Cumbria for a number of drop-in clinics. This is your chance to meet the team face-to-face and ask any questions you might have about your pension. Don't miss out on this fantastic opportunity...



Whitehaven

- ▶ Wednesday 4 February 2026
- ▶ 9am–11am

Workington

- ▶ Wednesday 4 February 2026
- ▶ 12pm–2pm

Penrith

- ▶ Thursday 19 February 2026
- ▶ 1pm–3pm

Keswick

- ▶ Wednesday 4 March 2026
- ▶ 10am–12pm

Carlisle East

- ▶ Wednesday 11 March 2026
- ▶ 12pm–2pm

Kendal

- ▶ Tuesday 31 March 2026
- ▶ 10am–12pm

Barrow

- ▶ Thursday 2 April 2026
- ▶ 11am–1pm

Wigton

- ▶ Tuesday 24 March 2026
- ▶ 10am–12pm

No need to book – just turn up!

Making Cumbria a safer place for all



@cumbriafire



cumbriafire.gov.uk



Melissa Taggart

HR and Pensions Development Assistant

Fire Fighters Charity: Networking Event at Jubilee House – 26 March

A networking event will be held at Jubilee House on the evening of 26 March. Our aim is to get exposure to businesses local to the area who may not be aware of the charity and the amazing facilities we have in their local area for our Fire Family so that we can start conversations with them. We would also like to extend the invitation to any of your staff at Cumbria Fire & Rescue Service who have a business to come and make some connections in the area.

The event is free to attend and people can [register for it here](#).

A tour of the facilities will also be available for anyone who has not been for support previously.

We hope that there will be more events like this in the future at Jubilee House as well.

Thank you for your help in making this event a success.

Alex Byers

Regional Fundraiser – Fire Fighters Charity

To have your news included in this section please email:

CFRS.update@cumbriafire.gov.uk

Our Code of Ethics



Putting our
communities
first



Dignity and
respect



Equality,
diversity and
inclusion



Integrity



Leadership

