



CFRS Weekly Update – 12/6/26

Weekly Update – At a Glance

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**** 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

ACFO Ben Ryder standing in as Temporary Chief Fire Officer

As you will all be aware, Paul Hancock has now stepped down as Chief Fire Officer for Cumbria Fire & Rescue Service.

To ensure that the Service continues to have a strong and stable leadership, Assistant Chief Fire Officer (ACFO) Ben Ryder will be standing in as Temporary Chief Fire Officer.

Ben joined Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service in 2001 having previously served in the Royal Air Force Fire & Rescue Service. He served across several stations as a firefighter, crew and watch manager before being promoted to station manager in 2008. He was promoted to group manager in 2014 serving as the district commander for Liverpool before moving onto a role in prevention. In 2020/21 Ben led the largest capital project Merseyside has ever undertaken developing a new training and development centre and national resilience centre of excellence. Ben was then promoted to Area Manager Response; he has extensive operational experience commanding some of the most high-profile major incidents in recent memory. Since joining CFRS Ben has evidenced his personal and professional commitment to Cumbria by picking up the Chair of the Local Resilience Forum and is looking forward to his family completing the move to Penrith and children starting their new schools in September.

Ben has been with Cumbria Fire & Rescue Service since July 2025 and has proven himself as a strong and capable leader who understands the needs of the Service, staff and residents. He will be with leading the organisation with support from the Senior Leadership Team (SLT), myself and my Office until we officially appoint a permanent Chief Fire Officer.

Cumbria Fire & Rescue Service is a fantastic organisation, and I constantly see the dedication and passion of all staff – your teamwork is what has driven the organisation to succeed. I ask that you all continue to support one another, Ben and SLT over the coming months and I will provide updates around the Chief Fire Officer recruitment in due course.

If anyone has any questions, please contact my Office on 01768 217734 or at commissioner@cumbria-pcc.gov.uk.

David Allen

Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner for Cumbria

Supervisory Engagement Sessions

On Monday 3 July, ACFO Lauren Woodward will host the first Supervisory Engagement Session at Carlisle East Fire Station.

These sessions will be held quarterly and move around the county throughout the year. They are open to all supervisory managers and an opportunity for open dialogue with Lauren.

If you have any general questions or queries, or have any questions you'd like to submit prior to the meeting to allow any relevant information to be gathered please feel free to email Lauren on lauren.woodward@cumbriafire.gov.uk or send them via your Station Manager.

Lauren Woodward

Assistant Chief Fire Officer

Home Fire Safety Visit Backlog Request

We are currently looking for Wholetime staff who have on-call contracts to carry out home fire safety visits within on-call areas. This is to help us reduce the backlog of visits we currently have in service. Visits will be given to personnel from the prevention team and they will receive 90 minutes of single time pay per visit.

Moving forward from October onwards all on-call personnel will receive the training to deliver home fire safety visits and teams who would like to will then be given visits by the prevention team on a monthly basis and these will be paid on the same terms as above.

Please contact Catherine Moody – Catherine.Moody@cumbriafire.gov.uk if you are interested in carrying out visits.

Scott Cameron

Group Manager – Prevention & Protection

Air Con Work Fire HQ – Main Entrance – 15 June to 17 June 2026

The heating, ventilation, and air conditioning system at CFRS HQ Penrith is currently being replaced. Work will commence on the ground floor, reception / station side) of the building on Monday 15 June, please see the dates through June.

Reception / Business Support – from 15 June to 22 June Reception / Business support will temporarily relocate to the L&D office. Visitors will be greeted at the side door (next to the Lowther Room), where the visitors book will be stored. Incoming and Outgoing post will also be temporary moved to the L&D office.

- ▶ PE11a Foyer – **15/16 June** – the main entrance to Fire HQ will be closed during this period of works. Please can we ask staff not use the main door, this will allow contractors to work. On Call personnel will still be able to enter the main door.
- ▶ PE27 BA Classroom – **15 and 18 June**
- ▶ PE08 Fire Kit/Dressing Area – **16/17 June**
- ▶ PE10 Watch Room – **18/19 June**
- ▶ PE11 Reception/General office
- ▶ PE12 Photocopy Room – **22 June**
- ▶ PE80 Comms Room – **22 June–3 July**
- ▶ PE14 Watch Managers' Office – **23/24 June**
- ▶ PE81/82 Equans Office Store – **25/26 June**
- ▶ PE65 Rec/TV/Resting Room – **25/26 June**

Joanne Cullen

Project Delivery Lead

Stations Zoning update

Staff may have noticed the new zone signage being installed around Fire Service buildings.

For background, zones are defined by activity, not by assumed contamination levels. All areas are considered clean, zoning is simply a way to help us keep them that way.

Red zones do not always present a contamination risk, staff and visitors should not feel that it is unsafe to enter these areas. This depends on the activities taking place within that zone at any given time.

Where decontamination procedures and equipment are used appropriately during and after incidents, and station equipment and areas are cleaned down after use, red zones will remain safe for community safety events and everyday activities.

If you have any questions, then please contact Tony Paterson.

Tony Paterson

Group Manager – Technical and Fleet Services

Road Vehicle Hazard Warning Stickers

Stations are advised that road vehicle hazard warning stickers are now available to order via the **Operational Assurance page**.

To place an order, navigate to the **Command Support Pack ordering section** and select the road vehicle warning stickers from the available options.

Stations should order replacement stickers once current stock has been depleted. Maintaining adequate stock is essential to support the safe and effective management of vehicle incidents.

Alex Otway

Firefighter | Gold Watch | Operational Assurance Department



Other

Community Scrutiny Panel (CSP) Annual Report

CSP plays a vital role in providing an independent and confidential forum to review casework and examine matters relating to integrity and ethical standards across both Cumbria Police and Cumbria Fire and Rescue Service (CFRS).

Their latest annual report is available via the link below:

[Community Scrutiny Panel - Cumbria PFCC](#)

[CSP Annual Report 2025](#)

The report offers clear assurance that CFRS remains committed to transparent, independent scrutiny and continues to address people-related matters promptly, professionally, and with appropriate outcomes. If you have a moment, it's worth a read as it highlights the positive impact of external oversight and the progress we continue to make.

Jemma Taylor and Helen Clark

HR Managers

Policy Updates

The HR Team have recently updated some of our policies following the introduction of the Employment Rights Act 2025.

These changes came into effect on 6 April 2026, and the latest policies are now available on the website: **[A-Z Policies, Procedures and Guidance | Cumbria Fire & Rescue Service](#)**. A summary of the key changes is outlined below:

Family Leave

- ▶ Day one rights for leave – You can now take Paternity Leave and unpaid Parental Leave from your first day of employment, there is no longer a minimum service requirement.
- ▶ Bereaved Partner's Paternity Leave – A new type of leave is available for partners/fathers if the baby's mother or primary carer sadly passes away within the

first year. This allows for up to 52 weeks' leave, with cases being reviewed by HR on an individual basis, to ensure appropriate guidance and support is provided.

Sexual Harassment and Whistleblowing

► Expanded whistleblowing protections – Sexual harassment is recognised as a qualifying disclosure and can now be reported under our Whistleblowing Policy, giving additional protection to those who speak up. Both policies have been updated to reflect this change.

The HR Team continue to update policies in line with central government changes to ensure they remain fair, compliant, and supportive for employees. All of the above changes have been made with the support of our Trade Union colleagues. Should you have any specific queries please don't hesitate to contact the HR Team hr@cumbriafire.gov.uk

Rachel Rollins

HR Advisor – HR Team, People and Talent

Lancashire FRS Quarter Four Organisational Assurance Summary

Please find the national and regional learning from Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service's Organisational Assurance Summary below.

[**Organisational Assurance Summary - Quarter 4 2025-26 | Rise 360**](#)

If you have any questions, please contact Kasey Grainger.

Kasey Grainger

Station Manager – Operational Planning

To have your news included in this section please email:

CFRS.update@cumbriafire.gov.uk

