

**LANCASHIRE COMBINED FIRE AUTHORITY AND
LANCASHIRE FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE
CORPORATE COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY**

Our corporate communications aims

- To achieve the highest possible standards in our communications with internal and external stakeholders to contribute to Service objectives to best effect.
- To actively promote and communicate the Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service's policies, activities, services and fire safety messages to the widest possible audiences to make Lancashire a safer community.

Our promises

Internal communications

- To provide functional information which helps staff do their job.
- To convey policy decisions so that staff are informed about organisational objectives.
- To ensure that Combined Fire Authority Members are kept informed of initiatives to support their community leadership role.
- To explain the purpose of decisions and policies so that staff understand the reasons for action.
- To outline progress on projects.
- To explain changes.
- To manage crises so that staff are clear on their roles at such times.
- To convey news.
- To encourage two way dialogue.

External communications

- To convey fire safety messages in ways that will maximise their effect on community safety, reaching and influencing vulnerable groups and contributing to our fire reduction objectives.
- To tell the public what services and support are available, what standards they can expect, how to access services and what to do if they have a complaint about the service we provide.
- To enable the public to have a say in how we deliver our service by keeping them informed of proposed developments in advance and providing opportunities for feedback.
- To facilitate effective two-way communications between Service personnel and elected members, partner organisations and groups.
- To liaise effectively with the media, providing incident and other information (subject to Data Protection and confidentiality guidelines) to enable them to report accurately and comprehensively on incidents and news relating to the Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service.

The benefits of good communications

Good communication helps deliver our objectives, by:-

- Explaining our aims and objectives in terms of policies, services and ways of working to internal and external stakeholders.
- Engaging communities, (including vulnerable and 'difficult to read' communities) partners and staff in constructive, two-way dialogue, ensuring more effective communications that are aligned with the Service's goals.
- Enhancing our accessibility and accountability to the communities we serve.
- Recognising and celebrating the successes and achievements of our organisation, our personnel and those we work in partnership with.

Our strategy for corporate communications – the principles

Underpinning our strategy are principles we will follow to communicate effectively with internal and external stakeholders.

Being sure we meet our stakeholders' communications needs

- By monitoring and reviewing our communications regularly, we will identify whether there are perceived shortfalls in information reaching stakeholders, or missed opportunities for them to communicate with us or with each other.
- At the same time, we will encourage stakeholders to help us establish what has worked well, and why, in order to promote best practise in communications.
- Where there are shortfalls, we will establish what is hindering the communication process in terms of the volume, content, quality and timeliness of information given and received.

Our checklist for effective communication – internal and external stakeholders

- We will identify the factors that may have an impact on how well we reach the right people with the right message at the right time and will have strategies in place to ensure successful outcomes.
- We will have a variety of methods (media) for communicating including a range of formats and languages when appropriate and will regularly review their effectiveness, always seeking new and better media to add to the list.
- We will endeavour to achieve consistency in terms of the content and quality of our communications throughout the Service and with our external stakeholders.
- Effective communications are crucial and establishing our communications objectives and challenges will continue to be an essential element of project planning and service delivery.
- When project outcomes are evaluated we will determine whether communications objectives have been met and will incorporate lessons learned in future projects.