Digital Strategy
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Lancashire Fire
and Rescue Service
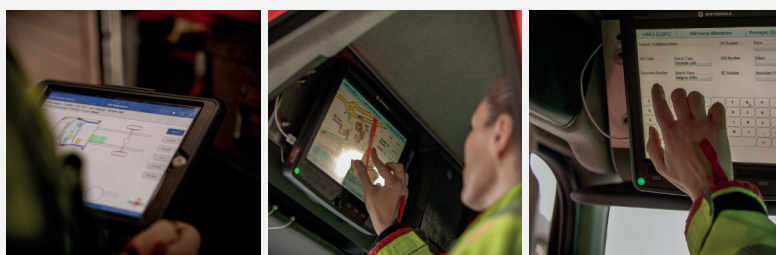
Digital Strategy

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Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service

Digital and Data Strategy

Introduction

In recognition of the significant role that technology can play in a modern fire and rescue services (FRS), we are actively seeking ways to exploit emerging technology across the service to improve our communication and process efficiency.

This strategy sets out a framework of how we will progress that agenda together with setting out some of the external influences that we need to consider. These include our active engagement in digital and data workstreams that are underway in the National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) and which are attempting to standardise data and technology approaches within FRS across the country. This will ensure best practice and best value to the communities that we serve.

In addition, we will consider best practice guidelines from central Government together with other partner agency collaborations wherever possible. We will also look to align ourselves with established and accepted best practices and working patterns from across the technology sector.

The underpinning focus throughout our digital journey will be on maximising the effectiveness and efficiency of our workforce to ensure the best possible service and levels of engagement for our communities.

Service key principles

Our culture plays an integral part in enabling the service to achieve our priorities of:

- Preventing fires and other emergencies from happening
- Protecting people and property when they happen
- Responding to fires and other emergencies quickly and competently
- Valuing our people
- Delivering value for money

Our service "STRIVE" values underpin everything we seek to achieve, which fundamentally aligns to the fire and rescue service national code of ethics:

- Service
- Trust
- Respect
- Integrity
- Value
- Empowerment

Through the key objectives set within the digital strategy, we aim to support the creation of a positive, inclusive culture that encourages innovation and continuous improvement. Achieving the right culture will enable us to deliver the best services and be an outstanding fire and rescue service for our communities and visitors.

To help achieve this, we will align our digital landscape with these organisational values to ensure that:

- Our workforce can make effective use of technology to communicate, safely store and share information
- Our workforce can work effectively from anywhere using the most appropriate device for their role, intrinsically increasing our efficiency
- Our workforce has easy access to data and intelligence relevant to their role and that the information is current to help increase safety and reduce risk
- Our workforce is digitally engaged in the organisation and champion a digital first culture
- We strive to reduce paper, printing and increase our process efficiency through digitisation and automation
- Our digital solutions focus on the needs of our communities and that they are able to engage with us in a more digitally enabled and accessible way

Digital horizon

Government digital directive

The strategic direction across UK Government is now Digital by Default, Cloud First. This requires public sector organisations to consider and fully evaluate cloud solutions first before considering other options.

What is the cloud?

The cloud allows users to access the same files and applications from almost any device, because the computing and storage is on servers in global data centre accessed through the internet, instead of locally on the users own device or network.

Why is it called the cloud?

In the early days of the Internet, technical diagrams often represented the servers and networking infrastructure that make up the Internet as a cloud and the phrase stuck.

Furthermore, the Government Functional Standard for Digital, Data and Technology outlines the following key principles:

1. Digital services align with government policy and meet clearly identified user needs.

2. Management and governance are proportionate and appropriate to the work and risk profile of the organisation.

3. Business processes are evaluated as part of a technical or digital project or programme so that they meet the needs of the business and the end users.

4. Delivery teams comprise appropriately skilled people, with the expertise required to undertake their assigned work.

5. Digital services are designed as end-to-end services, from a citizen's or user's viewpoint.

6. Appropriate levels of security and privacy are designed as an integral part of the digital service.

7. Digital and technology components are designed using mandatory government open standards where needed; and are adaptable, interoperable and shareable.

8. Performance data and analytics are shared or published where possible to improve policy development and government transparency.

9. Data is collected, stored, used and deleted in the appropriate and ethical way.

10. Public service codes of conduct and ethics and those of associated professions are upheld

This is further explored in the following definitions that we will use as reference guides throughout our digital journey:

- Technology Code of Practice: The technology code of practice - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)
- Government Service Standard: Service Standard - Service Manual - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)
- Data Ethics Framework: Data Ethics Framework - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

To embrace these standards, we will ensure that the customer (both internal and external) is at the heart of everything we do and that the customer experience is optimised at every point of that journey. We will also engage with partner agencies in an efficient and automated way to ensure that customer transition and data exchange between agencies is smooth, seamless and complete to ensure effort is minimised wherever possible.

LFRS Digital Landscape

In accordance with government guidance, as well as maintaining a fit for purpose on-premise network we are making the shift to cloud technology wherever there is a suitable use case for it, wherever it ensures best value for money while also improving service quality and availability.

Horizon scanning and innovation

We will ensure that we consistently evaluate new products, features and technology with a view to embracing them across the service to continue our drive for innovation, service improvement and operational effectiveness and efficiency.

More specifically, to establish whether there are any real-world use cases where emerging technologies can provide advantage to either efficiency or quality across our service portfolio, we are evaluating things like:

Artificial Intelligence (AI)

Sets of logic, rules and algorithms programmed into computers and other devices to provide smarter, more enriched and engaging experiences. Some examples include Siri, Alexa, Google and other smart assistants, or chatbots on consumer websites.

Machine Learning (ML)

Taking AI to the next level are self-improving algorithms that are able to "learn" from data, identify complex patterns and make decisions with minimal intervention. Examples include spatial awareness of self-driving cars, or the ability to recognise objects in photographs and images.

Robotic Process Automation (RPA)

Essentially using elements of both AI and ML to automate common, repetitive and largely manual processes. If you remember recording macros in the 1990's to automate spreadsheet tasks, think of RPA as far more powerful versions that are not limited to spreadsheets.

Internet of Things (IoT)

Essentially the ability to connect any device to a network or the internet, so that it can exchange data and trigger processes or actions. Examples include smart thermostats, or printers that are able to order ink when it detects that it's running low.

7 digital themes

We have reverse engineered the organisation's strategic objectives and identified seven key themes that will help us to enable delivery of them:

Delivery	Departmental Empowerment	Data Accessibility and Self Service	Efficiency and Automation
Delivery Partners Gold Partners DT Pro Dev Team DT Business Analysts Business Developers	Apps Digital Data Collection Process Automation Automatic Notifications	Data Warehouse Business Intelligence Platform Data Resilience	Integrated ecosystem • Apps • Digital Data Collection • Process Automation • Automatic Notifications

Delivery	Departmental Empowerment	Data Accessibility and Self Service
Partner and Sector Collaboration Digital Solution Sharing Data Sharing Tools • Identity Management • Conditional Access • Cyber Security Controls • Information Governance	Identity Management Conditional Access Cyber Security Controls Information Governance	Government Directive NFCC Standards Sector Collaboration

Theme 1: Delivery

To deliver cost effective digital solutions across the service **we will:**

Implement the following delivery model:

Delivery partners

Whenever we need to implement at pace or if we need specialist skills or knowledge that fall outside of our workforce, we will engage with 3rd party specialist partners. We will do this in an open and transparent way and will use compliant routes to market such as G-Cloud (Digital marketplace), Crown Commercial Services or approved procurement frameworks.

Pro DT team

We will maintain a core establishment of experienced technical experts who will engage with customers across the Service to develop and build professional, integrated solutions using the most relevant technology. We will integrate off the shelf products or inter-agency collaborative solutions where this is appropriate and more cost effective or will develop bespoke solutions to cater for a specific requirement which enables delivery of a quality service to our communities.

Business developers

We will develop and skill a cohort of power users, or business developers, at more local levels that are able to make use of low code products and workflow tools to produce digital solutions

Continue to mature our Agile development methodology, using established tools and techniques to embed principles that underpin:

The Agile Manifesto

We are uncovering better ways of developing software by doing it and helping others do it.

Through this work we have come to value:

Individuals and interactions over processes and tools

Working software over comprehensive documentation

Customer collaboration over contract negotiation

Responding to change over following a plan

That is, while there is value in the items on the right, we value the items on the left more.

Source: Agile Manifesto for Software Development | Agile Alliance

Work with our Project Management Office to align this methodology with the Axelos published PRINCE2 AGILE standard.

Theme 2: Departmental empowerment

To help embed the Service key principles **we will:**

Engage with the organisation to champion a cohort of business (or citizen) developers at more local levels, that are able to make use of low code products and workflow tools to produce digital solutions that help to automate processes and create efficiency in their own area.

This will reduce the volume on the pro team, add to the development resource pool and will help to empower departments to create their own business solutions under proper guidance and governance.

Make available common data sets to consume through these solutions that will further enable departments to be self-service enabled and to maximise efficiency through technology at a local level.

Theme 3: Data Accessibility and Self Service

To encourage a culture of integration and self-service **we will:**

Create a cloud-based service wide Intranet that is accessible on any device from any location, giving our workforce easy access to data and intelligence that is relevant to their role.

Utilise the cloud to create and publish core data sets that are made available throughout the organisation and will ensure consistency and uniformity across reporting and line of business systems.

Further extend these data services by using integration to enable seamless communication between our line of business systems, to ensure that data and information relating to the services we provide to the community are consistent and efficiently used across the organisation.

Create a cloud first data warehouse to ensure all of our data that serves our Key Performance Indicator (KPI) reporting is available and current.

Implement a Business Intelligence platform that will compliment this and make it possible for users to create their own reporting solutions with contextualised data that is relevant and accurate at a local level. It will also ensure that every user has access to the most up to date data across the service to assist with accurate and informed decision making.

Continue to enable a mobile workforce, ensuring that every user has a device that is suitably enabled to perform their role with maximum efficiency, placing the focus on improving our service to the community.

Help to achieve this by creating our service portfolio to be mobile enabled using cloud hosted services to communicate with mobile devices through:

- Native mobile apps (developed by the pro team to align with a specific feature)
- Low code mobile solutions (developed by the pro team or business developers)
- Mobile data analysis and reporting tools

Theme 4: Efficiency and Automation

Wherever possible **we will:**

Look to introduce emerging technologies to create efficiencies in traditionally labour inefficient and manual process.

This will include:

- workflow tools and RPA to automate processes
- AI to more easily signpost our workforce to relevant content and support
- perimeter integrations and interfaces to create a seamless flow of data and content between on-premise and cloud-based solutions

Make these tools available to our cohort of business developers.

Theme 5: Collaboration and Sharing

To foster a culture of collaboration and sharing **we will:**

Actively seek to engage with partner agencies and the wider FRS community with a view to building and delivering digital solutions.

Make any solutions we build available to our partner agencies and will seek to adopt solutions developed by them in return, where they align with our processes and demonstrate best value for money.

Leverage the tools made available through our cloud ecosystem to share content easily and securely with partner agencies, following the security controls set out below.

Theme 6: Securing content

Working with our Security, Information Governance and Records Management teams **we will:**

Use our cloud-based security and content control solutions to ensure that:

- Our data and content are secured in transit and at rest using relevant and current cyber security measures (security and encryption, Data Loss Prevention, Information Protection)
- Only content relevant to the role of our workforce is accessible to them
- Our data is classified and controlled across the organisation according to its content and sensitivity
- Our data and content are archived and removed relevant to our processing needs and in accordance with legislation

Ensure that the sharing of data and content with partner agencies is done in a secure and controlled way and that this content is removed or archived when it is no longer relevant.

Ensure that our cloud-based data and content is backed-up and resilient and that adequate tactical plans are in place to ensure business continuity across our service portfolio.

Theme 7: National alignment

Wherever possible **we will:**

Seek to align our digital solutions with partner agencies and government standards such as Government Digital Services (GDS).

Actively seek involvement and alignment with National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) Digital and Data initiatives, workstreams and published standards.

Make any interfaces that we create, through which we exchange data, compliant with government and NFCC data service standards.

Link in to the NFCC Data Hub when fully operational and in service.

How will we enable the organisational strategies to deliver?

In order to ensure that our digital strategy is relevant and successfully aligns with the organisation's objectives, the following matrices outline elements of the digital strategy that will help to deliver our other organisational strategies. These enablers refer to the 7 digital pillars defined earlier in the document.

Prevention Strategy	
Strategic deliverable	Digital theme enablers
• Working collaboratively with our partners and communities	Data accessibility and Self Service Collaboration and Sharing Securing content
• Using incident intelligence and data to drive our activities	Data accessibility and Self Service
• Fire safety in the home	(Delivery (HFSC refresh) National alignment (NFCC)
• Arson risk in the home, built environment and outdoors	Delivery Departmental Empowerment

Prevention Strategy	
Strategic deliverable	Digital theme enablers
• Working collaboratively	Collaboration and Sharing Securing content
• Delivering our services intelligently	Data accessibility and Self Service
• Operating a risk-based inspection programme	Delivery (RBIP / AG solution) Data accessibility and Self Service
• Adapting to new legislation and responsibilities	Departmental Empowerment
• Enforcing compliance through transparent enforcement management and prosecutions	Delivery (PORIS, BFSC, RBIP) National alignment (NFCC) Departmental Empowerment
• Linking protection activity to community safety	Data accessibility and Self Service
• Linking protection activity to response and preparedness	Data accessibility and Self Service
• Measuring and evaluating our performance	Data accessibility and Self Service

Response Strategy	
Strategic deliverable	Digital theme enablers
• Work collaboratively in preparing and developing operational/response policy and procedures	Collaboration and Sharing Securing content
• Update existing policy and procedures following research and development activities	Data accessibility and Self Service
• Investigate and report on activities internal and external to the service	Data accessibility and Self Service
• Deliver service improvement to support the objectives of the CFA	Delivery Departmental Empowerment Data accessibility and Self Service
• Identify and provide options to improve service performance in all areas of operational response	Departmental Empowerment Data accessibility and Self Service

People Strategy	
Strategic deliverable	Digital theme enablers
• We will continue to embed the Service values, behaviours, and the Code of Ethics making LFRS a place where everyone feels valued and included	Departmental Empowerment Collaboration and Sharing
• We will continue to develop the capability and resilience of leaders who can energise their teams, who encourage flexibility, innovation and who promote continuous improvement	Departmental Empowerment
• We will continue to actively engage with our workforce responding to feedback and involving staff in the shaping of	Departmental Empowerment Collaboration and Sharing

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