

Status of Report: Public**Meeting: Corporate Governance Committee****Date: 23 July 2024****Subject: His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services Improvement Plan and Culture Report Recommendations****Report by: The Chief Fire and Rescue Officer****Author: Station Manager Matthew Walters - Business Assurance****For: Information****Purpose**

1. The purpose of this report is to inform the Corporate Governance Committee (CGC) of how the Service is progressing with the implementation of the Improvement Plan, which was developed in response to the inspection by His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) during May / June 2022. An updated plan, detailing the progress made so far, is attached as Appendix A to this report.
2. The report also informs the Committee how the service is progressing with the HMICFRS Cultural Report recommendations following its publication in March 2023. An updated plan, detailing the progress made so far, is attached as Appendix B to this report.

Recommendation

3. The Committee is asked to note the progress of the Improvement Plan and the Cultural Report Recommendations.

Executive Summary

4. The HMICFRS inspection was completed in June 2022 with the inspection report issued in January 2023. The report identified good progress for the Service, with it being graded good in nine areas and requires improvement in two others.
5. At a lower level the report identified 13 areas for improvement (AFI'S). In response, the Service has produced an Improvement Plan addressing these areas and self-identified six other areas where it wants to improve; these have been called Service Improvement Initiatives (SII). There were four outstanding areas from the 2021 inspection that are also being addressed to close. This has resulted in a total of 76 tasks to complete.

6. Following a number of high-profile events and media articles, the Home Secretary commissioned HMICFRS to undertake a spotlight review into Fire and Rescue Service culture. Data was used from previous inspections and a small number (10) of Services were interviewed; this did not include Leicestershire.
7. The HMICFRS Culture Report was completed and published in March 2023 with a total of 35 Recommendations, of which 20 were aligned to Fire Services to complete. The remaining sit with national bodies or central government to deliver.
8. Progress up to 1 June 2024 is presented below and shows out of the 76 tasks, 38 have been completed, 37 are in progress and one is yet to start.

Background

9. HMICFRS has now reviewed its judgement and criteria levels where a fifth grading has been introduced. The additional grade of adequate had been added for this round of inspections. The five areas are.
 - I. Outstanding
 - II. Good
 - III. Adequate
 - IV. Requires Improvement
 - V. Inadequate
10. Following inspection, HMICFRS produced a report detailing the findings, which focussed at a strategic level on three areas – Effectiveness, Efficiency, and People. These three pillars make up the 11 judgement criteria.
11. In the last inspection in 2022, Leicestershire Fire and Rescue Service was graded as Good for Effectiveness, Requires Improvement for Efficiency and Good for People (of the 11 areas, LFRS was rated as good in nine and requires improvement in two).
12. In the previous inspection in 2018, the Service was graded as Requires Improvement for Effectiveness, Requires Improvement for Efficiency and Requires Improvement for People (of the 11 areas LFRS was rated as good in four and requiring improvement in seven).
13. Within the report, HMICFRS had recommended that 13 AFI's are considered. In addition to these, the Service self-identified an additional six other SII's and four outstanding areas to complete from the 2021 Inspection. The Improvement Plan was produced to put in place tasks to address the areas highlighted within the report. There are 76 Tasks in total.

14. The table below indicates the number of AFI's for each pillar and the number of tasks to be undertaken within the Improvement Plan that required attention. It details the number of tasks undertaken for completion of the SII's and AFI's from 2021.

Table showing Areas for Improvement, Service Improvement Initiatives and AFI's from 2021		
HMICFRS Pillar / Service Initiative	Areas for Improvement	Tasks to be undertaken.
Effectiveness	7	24
Efficiency	3	12
People	3	17
SII	N/A	16
AFI 2021	4	7
Total	17	76

15. Since the Improvement Plan was published in March 2023 the Service has been working hard to complete the tasks required. The table below shows the position in April 2024.

Table showing progress made by June 2024				
HMICFRS Pillar / Service Initiative	Total Tasks	Tasks Completed	Tasks In progress	Tasks still to start
Effectiveness	24	19	5	0
Efficiency	12	9	3	0
People	17	8	8	1
SII	16	4	12	0
AFI 2021	7	4	3	0
Total	76	38	37	1

16. Below is a brief overview of how the Improvement Plan has progressed since January 2023:

- I. Home Safety Check backlog has been addressed with a plan now in place to monitor going forwards. Aligned to that the Service has evaluated the partner referral process and is now delivering training to partners on how to complete a partner referral thus reducing and streamlining workloads.
- II. A new evaluation tool has been produced so all prevention activities are evaluated to show that the Service is targeting its prevention work against the highest risks within communities.
- III. A suite of Fire Protection reports are available on Power BII. This provides an overview of all Fire protection activity, including Building

Regulation Consultations and management of Unwanted Fire Signals which were areas for improvement from the last inspection.

- IV. The Service debriefing process has been reviewed to make it more robust and aligned to the new debriefing procedure. Operational Learning is changing to Organisational Learning so the Service can learn from operational and non-operational incidents/ events.
- V. The Community Risk Management Plan 2024- 2028 has been approved and a review of response times has taken place.
- VI. All Business continuity plans have been reviewed and work is continuing on a new mobilising system which will be in place for the end of 2024.
- VII. A new Digital Transformation Role has been created to look at how the Service can streamline its processes and systems to make it more efficient.
- VIII. A review of the working time directive has taken place with a new system for reporting and monitoring working hours. This is to support all staff in making sure they have a work life balance.
- IX. Equality Diversity and Inclusion network groups have been restructured with a new impetus on re-invigorating staff networks.
- X. Critical incident training has been included into the Trauma Risk Incident Management process to add further support to crews attending traumatic incidents.
- XI. Leadership programmes are now in place to support staff looking to progress throughout the organisation.

17. Following the HMICFRS Culture review a report was published with 35 recommendations. Below is a table of the 20 assigned to FRS to complete and progress to date.

Culture Report Recommendations for LFRS to complete				
Number of Recommendations	Started	In Progress	Completed	Still to Start
20	20	10	10	0

18. Progress with the Culture Report recommendations since March 2023 is detailed below:

- I. A review of DBS checking and monitoring has taken place and there is now a 3-year rolling programme for all staff to have completed a DBS check.
- II. A confidential reporting line "Say So" has been established and embedded within the organisation.
- III. All the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) has completed 360 feedback with a rollout to all service personnel in 2025 to align to their personal development discussions.

- IV. Core Code of Ethics training has been implemented with over 72 workshops delivered to 566 Staff.
- V. Work continues on Fire Standards and the requirements to meet the Leading the Service and Leading and Developing People Fire Standards.
- VI. An independent culture review has been actioned and completed with the outcomes published internally and externally. Work continues on the recommendations within the report.
- VII. Equality Impact Assessments (EIA) have been reviewed and a procedure is now in place for all new Policies and Procedures to have an EIA attached.
- VIII. The Service has completed the NFCC direct entry scheme and has appointed two successful candidates to the Station Manager role.

Report Implications/Impact

19. Legal (including crime and disorder)

The HMICFRS inspection programme is the Governmental check that Fire and Rescue Services are carrying out their statutory duties as laid out in the Fire and Rescue Services National Framework contained within the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004. By embracing the inspection process and by detailing an Improvement Plan, the Service is committed to showing progress and diligence in its function in carrying out these duties.

20. Financial (including value for money, benefits, and efficiencies)

The costs of delivering the Improvement Plan is factored into the agreed 2023-24 budget. Senior officers are responsible for improvements within their specific areas and any requirements for additional resources to deliver the Improvement Plan will need a business case to be created and approved by SMT.

21. Risk (including corporate and operational, health and safety and any impact on the continuity of service delivery)

There is reputational risk to the Service if it fails to achieve improvement in areas that are identified in the Improvement Plan and the recommendations from the culture report. This could lead to negative media reporting and lower community confidence in the Service.

22. Staff, Service Users and Stakeholders (including the Equality Impact Assessment)

The actions contained within the Improvement Plan and culture report recommendations may require prioritisation against other work-streams. In some areas, it may increase workload for departments.

23. Environmental

None arising from this report.

24. Impact upon Our Plan Objectives

Delivery of the Improvement Plan will positively contribute towards the aims and objectives of the Our Plan CRMP 2024- 20

Appendices

Appendix A – HMICFRS Improvement Plan

Appendix B – HMICFRS Culture Report Recommendations for LFRS

Appendix C- LFRS HMICFRS Report 2021 Inspection

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