

Status of Report: **Public**

Meeting: **Corporate Governance Committee**

Date: **9 March 2022**

Subject: **Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services Improvement Plan (HMICFRS)**

Report by: **The Chief Fire and Rescue Officer**

Author: **Station Manager Andy Daybell, Business Assurance**

For: **Information**

### **Purpose**

1. The purpose of this report is to inform the Corporate Governance Committee of how the Service is progressing with the implementation of the Improvement Plan which was developed in response to the inspection report by HMICFRS, following the report to the Committee at its meeting in November 2021. An updated Plan, showing the progress made so far, is appended to this report.

### **Recommendation**

2. The Committee is recommended to note the progress of the Improvement Plan.

### **Executive Summary**

3. The HMICFRS inspection was completed in November 2018, with the inspection report issued in June 2019 identifying 24 areas for improvement. In response, the Service has produced an Improvement Plan addressing these areas and 20 other identifiable comments from within the report that required attention. This Improvement Plan consists of a total of 88 actions for the Service to progress.
4. A report was presented to the Committee in November 2021 showing progress made against the Improvement Plan, in which 54 actions were completed. Progress to March 2022 shows that 70 actions are now complete. Work continues to complete those outstanding.

### **Background**

5. Following the inspection in November 2018, HMICFRS had produced a report in June 2019 detailing its findings, which focussed on three areas – effectiveness, efficiency and people. Leicestershire Fire and Rescue Service was graded as 'Requires Improvement' in all three areas.
6. Within the report, HMICFRS recommended that 24 'Areas for Improvement' (AFI) were considered. In addition to these, the Service found 20 other

comments or observations contained within the report which required consideration. The Improvement Plan was produced to put in place actions to address the areas highlighted within the report. There were 88 actions in total.

7. The table below indicates the number of areas for improvement for each pillar and the number of actions within the Improvement Plan that required attention:

<b>Areas for Improvement and Actions to be Undertaken</b>		
<b>HMICFRS Pillar</b>	<b>Areas for Improvement</b>	<b>Actions to be undertaken</b>
Effectiveness	10	29
Efficiency	4	8
People	10	31
Other comments	N/A	20
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>88</b>

8. Since the Improvement Plan was published in August 2019, the Service has been working hard to improve. The table below shows the position reported to the Committee in November 2021:

<b>Progress made up to November 2021</b>				
<b>HMICFRS Pillar</b>	<b>Total actions</b>	<b>Actions in progress</b>	<b>Actions complete</b>	<b>Actions not started</b>
Effectiveness	29	8	21	0
Efficiency	8	1	7	0
People	31	15	16	0
Other comments	20	10	10	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>88</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>0</b>

This compares to progress made as of March 2022:

<b>Progress made up to March 2022</b>				
<b>HMICFRS Pillar</b>	<b>Total actions</b>	<b>Actions in progress</b>	<b>Actions complete</b>	<b>Actions not started</b>

<b>Progress made up to March 2022</b>				
<b>Effectiveness</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Efficiency</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>People</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Other comments</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>88</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>0</b>

9. As the table above for 2022 shows, an additional sixteen actions are now complete. Below is a brief overview of how the Improvement Plan has progressed since November 2021:
- i. A review and subsequent amendments have now been made to the Home Safety Check and Safeguarding procedures.
  - ii. The Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) procedure and associated actions have been completed. Staff within the Fire Protection and Community Safety teams have now received an enhanced DBS check.
  - iii. Work to reduce the number of repeat false alarms (or unwanted fire signals (UFS)) has been completed. A procedure is now in place that will allow the Service to monitor premises with higher UFS and ensure that these are dealt with appropriately with an elevated response for premises with repeat calls. Protection and Response are now working jointly to reduce false alarms.
  - iv. The On-Call review project is now complete and the outcomes have been reviewed by the Senior Management Team (SMT). Actions and implementation of the recommendations are being managed as business as usual.
  - v. The new learning management system – Oracle - is now in place and is used by managers to view their team’s development and by staff to access e-learning courses. Work is currently ongoing to evaluate and improve the system.
10. Examples of actions near to completion include:
- i. A quality assurance plan is in place for staff who undertake Fire Protection audits. This plan will ensure consistency of performance. This needs to be evaluated over the next few months to ensure it is fully embedded.
  - ii. The new promotion procedure is in place and has been used for Station Manager and Watch Manager promotions. These have produced Talent Pools of individuals ready for promotion. It also identifies development

opportunities for individuals placed in a Development Pool. This procedure continues to be reviewed and evaluated.

- iii. Reviews of the Bullying and Harassment and Grievance procedures are close to completion.
11. The Service Liaison officer (SLO) continues to monitor progress and regularly provides updates the Senior Management Team and Tactical Management Team.
12. The HMICFRS pre-inspection data request and self-assessment deadline has been met by the Service. This included a submission of 136 separate documents. A HMICFRS staff survey and further data requests are expected prior to the next inspection.
13. The HMICFRS liaison lead is due to meet with the SLO this month to discuss the likely timetable for the inspection scheduled, which commences on the 9<sup>th</sup> May 2022.
14. The Improvement Plan Update has recently been made available on the Service website following widespread engagement in February 2022 with Service staff. Progress with actions detailed within this report and preparation for the inspection in 2022 is well under way. Implementation and communication plans have been devised, which evidence preparation progress.

### **Report Implications/Impact**

15. 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.

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

The costs of delivering the Improvement Plan is factored into the agreed 2021-22 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.

17. 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. This could lead to negative media reporting and lower community confidence in the Service.

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

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

19. Environmental

There are no environmental implications arising from this report.

20. Impact upon Our Plan Objective

Delivery of the Improvement Plan will positively contribute towards the aims and objectives of Our Plan 2020-24.

## **Background Papers**

Report to the Corporate Governance Committee November 2021 – Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services Improvement Action Plan.

<https://leics-fire.gov.uk/your-fire-service/decision-making/cfa-meetings/>

## **Appendix**

Appendix 1 – HMICFRS Improvement Plan Update v6.0 March 2022

## **Officers to Contact**

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