

Status of Report: **Public**

Meeting: **Corporate Governance Committee**

Date: **11th March 2021**

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

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

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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 report by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS), following the report to the Committee at its meeting in September 2020. An updated Plan, showing the progress made so far, is attached as Appendix A 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 CGC in September 2020 showing progress made against the Improvement Plan, in which 37 actions were completed. This report details progress to March 2021, and shows that 47 actions are now complete. Work continues to complete the outstanding actions. A further report to update on progress will be produced in September 2021.

Background

5. Following the inspection in November 2018, HMICFRS produced a report in June 2019 detailing its findings which were focussed on three areas –

effectiveness, efficiency and people. The Leicestershire Fire and Rescue Service was graded as 'Requires Improvement' in all three areas.

6. Within the report, HMICFRS has recommended that 24 'Areas for Improvement' (AFI) are considered. In addition to these, the Service found 20 other comments or observations contained within the report which require consideration. The Improvement Plan was produced to put in place actions to address the areas highlighted within the report. There are 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 in total:

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

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 CGC in September 2020:

Table showing progress made by August 2020				
HMICFRS Pillar	Total actions	Actions in progress	Actions complete	Actions not started
Effectiveness	29	12	17	0
Efficiency	8	5	3	0
People	31	19	11	1
Other comments	20	12	6	2
TOTAL	88	48	37	3

This compares to progress made as of March 2021:

Table showing progress made by March 2021				
HMICFRS Pillar	Total actions	Actions in progress	Actions complete	Actions not started
Effectiveness	29	10	19	0
Efficiency	8	2	6	0
People	31	16	14	1
Other comments	20	12	8	0
TOTAL	88	40	47	1

9. As the table for March 2021 shows, an additional ten actions are complete. Below is a brief overview of how the Improvement Plan has progressed since September 2020:
- i. Increased knowledge of the built environment and fire protection is being achieved through Level 3 Fire Protection courses. Some Watch Managers and Fire Protection staff have completed this course and will be qualified to carry out audits of premises. Plans are now in place to roll this out to all operational Watch Managers to enable them to audit premises and an introductory course will be focussed at Crew Managers, to enable them to hazard spot at buildings.
 - ii. Training is now complete for staff on Marauding Terror Attack. This course is now on the learning management system (Oracle) and is on a two year rolling cycle to ensure knowledge and understanding remains current.
 - iii. The Service has an intranet site which is used by all departments to log any areas of collaboration with other fire or emergency services and other partners. This site is kept up to date and is reviewed by the Tactical Management Team (TMT) every six months. When an item of collaboration is closed, it is reviewed by TMT and lessons learnt are shared with department heads.
 - iv. There is now a Business Continuity (BC) testing and exercise programme in place. This is across all stations, departments and Fire Control. It will ensure that BC plans are suitable and fit for purpose.
 - v. The corporate risk assessment has been reviewed and updated for the Incident Command validation and re-validation programme for

commanders at all levels. This reflects the excellent work done by the Learning and Development department to ensure all Incident Commanders are accredited to national recognised levels.

- vi. The Service has an Equalities, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) team, including a new Watch Manager, who will be responsible for the delivery of EDI training across the Service, to ensure a better understanding by staff of key issues. The Tactical EDI Board that meets monthly now updates the Tactical Managers Team to share learning across all department heads. All district plans and department plans will report on EDI and any policies or procedures that are agreed will contain an equality impact assessment.
 - vii. Recruitment campaigns have been analysed to view the effectiveness in attracting people from under-represented groups. The recruitment methodology has been reviewed and changed. The 'Have a Go Days' aimed at under-represented groups have continued and their effectiveness has been measured. This work will continue to evolve.
 - viii. 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. One such course is the Safeguarding training which all staff complete. This is on a rolling two-year frequency to ensure that staff knowledge and understanding remains constant.
10. There are many other areas of work in progress. Examples of actions near to completion include:
- i. Quality assurance (QA) of staff who undertake Home Safety Checks is being put in place. A QA plan is also in place for staff who undertake Fire Protection audits. Both of these plans will ensure consistency of performance in the respective areas.
 - ii. Work continues to reduce the number of repeat false alarms (or unwanted fire signals (UFS)). A procedure is now in place that will allow the Service to monitor premises with higher UFS and ensures that these are dealt with appropriately with an elevated response for premises with repeat calls.
 - iii. Exercising of the MTA procedure has been affected by COVID-19. However, the Service is to take part in a joint exercise with the Police in March, which will test current plans and training.
 - iv. Department Business Continuity plans are near to completion.
 - v. A Health and Wellbeing strategy is being produced. This will incorporate all of the excellent work and procedures that are already in place that benefit staff. The Service has now embedded its Trauma Risk Incident Management (TRiM) process, for helping staff cope with traumatic

incidents that they attend. The Health and Wellbeing team has been tasked to produce this strategy and present it to staff.

- vi. 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 is now being reviewed and evaluated.
 - vii. The On Call review project is now complete and the outcomes are being reviewed by the Senior Management Team.
11. The Service Liaison Officer continues to monitor progress and updates the Senior Management Team (SMT), Tactical Management Team and the HMICFRS Service Liaison Lead (Leanne McMahon).
 12. The Improvement Plan Update was made available on the Service website in September 2020 and has been subject to widespread engagement with Service staff. Progress mentioned within this report will be made available to Service staff via presentations, social media and the internal magazine 'Service Matters'.

Report Implications/Impact

13. 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.

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

The costs of delivering the Improvement Plan is factored into the agreed 2020-21 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.

15. 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.

16. 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.

17. Environmental

None.

18. 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 September 2020 - HMICFRS Improvement Action Plan.

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

Appendix

Appendix - Improvement Plan Update March 2021

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