

Status of Report: *Public*

Meeting: Corporate Governance Committee

Date: 20 November 2019

Subject: Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) 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 the actions taken to develop an Improvement Plan to respond to the HMICFRS inspection report, to explain how the plan has been communicated externally and internally and how progress will be monitored going forward.

Recommendation

The Committee is recommended to note the production of the Improvement Plan and monitoring arrangements that are in place.

Executive Summary

2. The HMICFRS inspection identified 24 areas for improvement. This report explains the action plan that has been created to realise these improvements and other areas identified by the HMICFRS inspection team. The plan has been made publically accessible via the Service website and internally accessible on the intranet site. Staff engagement sessions have taken place and are still ongoing. Progress reports against the Plan will be presented to the CGC.
3. Internal mechanisms are in place to allow effective monitoring of activity across all departments.

Background

4. HMICFRS has inspected fire and rescue services across England. Their focus has been on the service they provide to the public, and the way they use the resources available. They have inspected 16 services in the second tranche of inspections, following on from the publication of the first tranche of 14 reports in December 2018. Each inspection has assessed how effective and efficient the Service is, how it protects the public against fires and other emergencies and how it responds to the same. They also assess how well each Service looks after the people who work there.

- Following the inspection in December 2018, HMICFRS produced a report in June 2019 detailing their findings which were focussed on 3 areas – effectiveness, efficiency and people. LFRS were graded as ‘Requires Improvement’ in all 3 areas, see the table below for more details:

HMICFRS Inspection results for LFRS – how did we do?

Effectiveness =		Requires Improvement	
Understanding the risk of fire and other emergencies	Good		
Preventing fires and other risks	Good		
Protecting the public through fire regulation	Requires Improvement		
Responding to fires and other emergencies	Requires Improvement		
Responding to national risks	Good		

Efficiency =		Requires Improvement	
Making best use of resources		Requires Improvement	
Making the fire and rescue service affordable now and in the future		Good	

People =		Requires Improvement	
Promoting the right values and culture		Requires Improvement	
Getting the right people with the right skills		Requires Improvement	
Ensuring fairness and promoting diversity		Requires Improvement	
Managing performance and developing leaders		Requires Improvement	



- Within the report, HMICFRS have recommended that we consider 24 ‘Areas for Improvement’ (AFI). In addition to these, we have found 20 other comments or observations contained within the report which require our ongoing consideration.
- At its meeting in June 2019, the Combined Fire Authority agreed that an Improvement Plan would be produced to put in place actions to address the areas highlighted in the HMICFRS report. HMICFRS do not require action plans to be presented to them for AFIs, however, for transparency the Improvement Plan has been shared with them. Our Service Liaison Lead for the HMICFRS confirmed that the Plan satisfies actions required to address the AFIs.
- Senior and middle managers were involved in developing action plans pertinent to their areas of responsibility. The Senior Management Team agreed the Improvement Plan at their Strategic meeting at the end of September.
- The actions contained within the Improvement Plan will be embedded within relevant department plans. This will allow progress to be monitored on each action by department heads and strategic leads. The Service Liaison Officer (SLO) appointed by the Service will also monitor overall progress and will provide updates to the Senior Management Team and report to the CGC.

10. The Improvement Plan has been communicated to the public via the Service website. Widespread engagement with Service staff has also taken place.

Report Implications/Impact

11. 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, LFRS is committed to showing progress and diligence in its function in carrying out these duties.

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

The costs of delivering the Improvement Plan are factored into the budget agreed for 2019. Where Strategic Leads identify a requirement for additional resources to deliver their responsibilities within the Improvement Plan, they will create and submit the necessary requests for approval. As a demonstration of the Service offering value for money, Firefighter cost per person per year in Leicestershire is £17.42 compared to the national average of £22.38.

13. 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 we fail to achieve improvement in areas that are identified as Areas for Improvement. This could lead to negative media reporting and lower community confidence in the Service.

14. 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.

15. Environmental

None.

16. Impact upon Our Plan Objective

Delivery of the Improvement Plan will positively contribute towards the aims and objectives of Our Plan 2019-22

Background Papers

None.

Appendices

Appendix A – HMICFRS Improvement Plan.

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