

Status of Report: *Public*

Meeting: Corporate Governance Committee

Date: 11 March 2020

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). This follows the earlier report to the Committee at its meeting in November 2019.

Recommendation

2. The Committee is recommended to note the progress of the Improvement Plan (attached as an appendix to this report) and arrangements that are in place to monitor and ensure delivery of the 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 (attached at the Appendix to this report) addressing these areas and 20 other identifiable comments from within the report that required attention.
4. Since the Improvement Plan was published in August 2019, the Service is addressing most of the areas identified. Internal mechanisms are in place to allow effective monitoring of activity across all departments. Progress is ongoing and a method for assurance of completed actions is being put in place.

Background


5. 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 now inspected all 45 Services within England. 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 completion of all the inspections, Sir Thomas Windsor published a 'State of Fire' report in January 2020 which gives his overall view of fire services within England and areas of suggested future improvements. The Service's Improvement Plan links to many of these areas.

- Following the inspection of Leicestershire Fire and Rescue Service in November 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	Efficiency =		Requires Improvement
Understanding the risk of fire and other emergencies	Good		Making best use of resources		Requires Improvement
Preventing fires and other risks	Good		Making the fire and rescue service affordable now and in the future		Good
Protecting the public through fire regulation	Requires Improvement		People =		Requires Improvement
Responding to fires and other emergencies	Requires Improvement		Promoting the right values and culture		Requires Improvement
Responding to national risks	Good		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 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.
- An Improvement Plan (attached at the Appendix) was 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. The Service Liaison Lead for the HMICFRS confirmed that the Plan satisfies actions required to address the AFIs.
- In total there are 88 actions for the Service to progress within the Improvement Plan. These are spread across the 3 pillars of Effectiveness, Efficiency and People. The table indicates the number of areas for improvement for each pillar and the number of actions within the Improvement Plan that require attention in total:

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

10. Since the Improvement Plan was published in August 2019, the Service has been working hard on most of these areas. Please see the table below for a summary of progress made to February 2020:

HMICFRS Pillar	Total actions	Actions in progress	Actions complete	Actions not started
Effectiveness	29	26	3	0
Efficiency	8	6	2	0
People	31	22	6	3
Other comments	20	11	6	3
TOTAL	88	65	17	6

11. As a brief overview of how the Improvement Plan is being progressed, please see below for specific examples:
- i. Actions that have been completed, for example, include Incident Command – where all Service Incident Commanders at all levels are qualified, in date and have regular reaccreditations in line with national best practice. The Service Exercise procedure has also been updated and training is regularly undertaken with neighbouring Services. Work has also been completed through staff engagements to develop Service Values and expected behaviours.
 - ii. Work in progress, for example, includes a project to purchase additional mobile data terminals to enhance risk information (amongst many other additional features) available on fire engines. Training on fire protection is also being given to all operational crews, with some Watch and Crew Managers being trained to a higher level to help this department achieve its inspection programme. A health and wellbeing procedure is also being produced with selected staff trained in Trauma Risk Management (TRiM) and Mental Health First Aid to ensure staff are looked after.
 - iii. Areas that are yet to be progressed, for example, include assurance processes being put in place for Home Safety Checks and Fire Protection auditors. The staff appraisal system will soon be under review to improve performance management and also a new 'learning management system' will be considered, to improve how training and competence of staff is recorded.
12. The Service Liaison Officer (SLO) appointed by the Service is monitoring overall progress via monthly meetings with department heads. The SLO also

provides updates to the Senior Management Team meetings and reports to the CFA's Corporate Governance Committee.

13. The Improvement Plan has been communicated to the public via the Service website. Widespread engagement with Service staff has also taken place. Progress mentioned within this report will also be made available to the public and staff via the website, social media and the internal magazine 'Service Matters'.

Report Implications/Impact

14. Legal (including crime and disorder)

The Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004 requires the Chief Inspector to prepare an inspection programme and framework which are approved by the Home Secretary before being progressed by HMICFRS. The relevant Framework is the Fire and Rescue Services National Framework for England which sets out the commitment to provide an assurance function to consider the effectiveness and efficiency of the service and how well it manages its people and fulfils its statutory obligations. 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.

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

The costs of delivering the Improvement Plan are factored into the budget agreed for 2019 and 2020. 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.

16. 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.

17. 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.

18. Environmental

None.

19. Impact upon Our Plan Objectives

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

Background Papers

None.

Appendices

Appendix - Service Improvement Plan.

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