

Status of Report: **Public**

Meeting: **Corporate Governance Committee**

Date: **24 November 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 Improvement Plan (HMICFRS), following the report to the Committee at its meeting in March 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 CGC in March 2021 showing progress made against the Improvement Plan, in which 47 actions were completed. This report details progress to September 2021, and shows that 54 actions are now complete. Work continues to complete the outstanding actions.

## Background

5. Following the inspection in November 2018, HMICFRS 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 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:

<b>Table showing 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 CGC in March 2021:

<b>Table showing progress made by March 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	10	19	0
Efficiency	8	2	6	0
People	31	16	14	1
Other comments	20	12	8	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>88</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>1</b>

This compares to progress made as of September 2021:

<b>Table showing progress made by September 2021</b>				
<b>HMICFRS Pillar</b>	<b>Total actions</b>	<b>Actions in progress</b>	<b>Actions complete</b>	<b>Actions not started</b>
<b>Effectiveness</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>21</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>15</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Other comments</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>88</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>0</b>

9. As the table above for September 2021 shows, an additional seven actions are complete. Below is a brief overview of how the Improvement Plan has progressed since March 2021:
- i. Increased knowledge of the built environment and fire protection is being achieved through Level 3 Fire Protection courses. All Watch Managers will have completed this course by Spring 2022. Crew Managers will also all have had an introductory hazard spotting course, completed within a similar timescale.
  - ii. Exercising of the Marauding Terrorist Attack procedure has now taken place, under the code name 'Operation Mercian Warrior'. This was a multi-agency-based exercise. Learnings and evaluations have been recorded into actions for each agency. The Service now has a plan for addressing those actions and recommendations.
  - iii. Department Business Continuity plans are now complete for all Service areas.
  - iv. Quality Assurance (QA) of staff who undertake Home Safety Checks is now in place, with evaluations feeding back into training.
  - v. A Health and Wellbeing strategy has now been produced. This incorporates all of the excellent work, procedures and support that are available. Trauma Risk Incident Management is now fully embedded, providing useful support and information for staff that have been exposed to traumatic incidents.
  - vi. The Service has an intranet site which is used by all departments to log any areas of collaboration with 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.

- vii. The Service's Equalities, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) team and Tactical EDI Board continue to meet monthly, providing updates to TMT to share learning across all departments. All district plans and department plans report on EDI and any policies or procedures that are agreed now contain an equality impact assessment. Phase 1 of EDI training has been completed, with Phase 2 commencing soon.
  - 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. Work is currently ongoing to evaluate and improve the system.
10. There are many other areas of work in progress. Examples of actions near to completion include:
- i. A QA 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 this is fully embedded.
  - 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. This will be closed once Operational Response is satisfied that their individual actions are evidenced and aligned with the procedure.
  - iii. 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.
  - 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 within TMT.
11. The Service Liaison officer continues to monitor progress and updates the SMT and TMT. A new HMICFRS liaison lead has now been appointed and will be available to the Service towards the end of November 2021.
12. The Improvement Plan Update was made available on the Service website in September 2021 and has been subject to widespread engagement with Service staff. Progress with actions detailed within this report and preparation for the inspection in 2022 is well under way. An implementation and communications plan has been devised, that will ensure continued progress.

## 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 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.

### 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

There are no environmental implications arising from this report.

### 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 March 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**

Improvement Plan Update September 2021

**Officers to Contact**

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