

Lancashire Combined Fire Authority

Planning Committee

Meeting to be held on 5 February 2024

His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) Update

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Executive Summary

This report provides an update on His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) activity.

Additionally, it provides information regarding Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service's (LFRS) ongoing preparations for HMICFRS Round 3 inspection, the inspection process, and wider HMICFRS activity including misconduct, and values and culture within fire and rescue services.

Recommendation

Planning Committee are requested to note and endorse the update.

Round 3 Overview

HMICFRS commenced Round 3 inspections in early 2023, the three pillars; effectiveness, efficiency, and people remain the same as Round 2. Likewise, the 11 diagnostics under each pillar which inspectors make graded judgements against.

Early engagement with our Service Liaison Lead Dominic Mika has taken place between Chief Fire Officer Justin Johnston and Area Manager Tom Powell (LFRS Service Liaison Officer). Dominic will start to be introduced into the Service over the coming months in the build up to our inspection. HMI Michelle Skeer, recently retired Chief Constable of Cumbria Constabulary, held meetings with the Chair of the Authority, the Deputy Chief Fire Officer, Trade Union officials, and staff from employee voice groups on the 4 December 2023; further meetings are planned to take place in 2024.

It is anticipated that Lancashire's inspection will take place around late spring/ early summer 2024. The Organisational Assurance Team within the Service Improvement Department continue to track progress against our previous inspection, monitor national themes and prepare LFRS for our Round 3 inspection. The Organisational Assurance Team are undertaking reality testing with departments and have initiated station-based reality testing aligned to HMICFRS inspection framework. Fourteen station-based audits have taken place so far and there is growing interest from other fire and rescue services as to how we carry out these preparedness visits.

HMICFRS have now published 12 Round 3 inspection reports, with three more due to be published this spring. HMIC Andy Cooke's 2023 State of Fire and Rescue report will also be published this spring and will cover their findings so far and wider impacts on fire and rescue services. A summary of the gradings for all 12 FRSs inspected so far in Round 3 can be found below.

	Effectiveness						Efficiency		People					
	Understanding the risk of fire and other emergencies	Preventing fires and other risks	Protecting the public through fire regulation	Responding to fires and other emergencies	Responding to major and multi-agency incidents	Making best use of resources	Making the fire and rescue service affordable now and in the future	Promoting the right values and culture	Getting the right people with the right skills	Ensuring fairness and promoting diversity	Managing performance and developing leaders			
Beds Round 3:		G	RI	RI	RI	A		RI	G		RI	A	A	A
Beds Round 2:		G	RI	RI	G	G		RI	G		G	G	G	G
Cambs Round 3:		G	G	G	A	A		O	G		G	A	G	RI
Cambs Round 2:		G	G	G	G	G		G	RI		G	G	G	G
Cheshire Round 3:		A	A	G	A	A		A	G		G	G	G	G
Cheshire Round 2:		G	G	G	G	G		G	G		G	G	G	RI
Warwicks Round 3:		A	RI	RI	A	A		RI	RI		A	RI	RI	RI
Warwicks Round 2:		RI	I	RI	RI	G		RI	RI		RI	RI	RI	RI
Cornwall Round 3:		A	RI	A	A	RI		RI	RI		A	RI	I	RI
Cornwall Round 2:		RI	RI	RI	RI	G		RI	RI		G	RI	RI	RI
Surrey Round 3:		A	RI	RI	RI	RI		RI	A		G	A	RI	RI
Surrey Round 2:		RI	G	G	RI	RI		RI	G		G	G	RI	RI
Bucks Round 3:		RI	RI	I	RI	A		RI	RI		RI	RI	RI	RI
Bucks Round 2:		RI	RI	RI	G	G		RI	RI		RI	RI	RI	RI
Merseyside Round 3:		G	O	G	G	O		O	G		A	A	A	G
Merseyside Round 2:		G	O	G	G	O		O	G		G	G	RI	G
Avon Round 3:		I	I	A	I	A		RI	RI		I	RI	RI	RI
Avon Round 2:		RI	RI	RI	G	G		RI	G		G	RI	RI	RI
Her. & Worc. Round 3:		A	A	G	A	A		A	A		A	G	G	G
Her. & Worc. Round 2:		RI	RI	G	RI	G		RI	RI		RI	RI	RI	RI
Northumb. Round 3:		A	G	A	A	A		A	G		G	G	A	A
Northumb. Round 2:		RI	RI	G	RI	G		RI	RI		RI	RI	RI	RI

Key	Outstanding	Good	Adequate	Requires Improvement	Inadequate
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HMICFRS Enhanced Monitoring Updates:

Avon Fire & Rescue Service:

Entered Engagement 2023

Reasons for enhanced monitoring:

- The service still doesn't have an effective system to make sure it gathers and records relevant and up-to-date risk information.
- Prevention activity isn't a sufficiently high priority for the service, and there is no prevention strategy, which should drive its day-to-day activities.
- The service's mobilisation system isn't reliable and crashes during 999 calls, which results in the public receiving a slower response to emergencies.
- The service needs to do more to improve its culture.

Buckinghamshire Fire & Rescue Service:

Entered Engagement 2023

Reasons for enhanced monitoring:

The service hasn't done enough since its last inspection to:

- Address the inspectorate's concerns and areas for improvement.
- Adequately identify and prioritise those most at risk from fire.
- Provide clear direction to make sure that its teams can prioritise work according to risk; and
- Improve equality, diversity and inclusion.

Misconduct within the fire and rescue service

HMICFRS thematic inspection of the handling of misconduct in fire and rescue services is continuing at pace. They have now completed seven in-depth service inspections with three more ongoing and due to be completed by the end of the January 2024. They are combining this detailed evidence with the data provided by all English services in the autumn data return; the staff survey they conducted in all services in November via their research partners Crest Advisory; and the survey and interviews that Crest are conducting with people that have left fire and rescue services. HMICFRS will be combining and triangulating all this evidence to identify key findings and any recommendations to the sector, with the report published in June 2024.

Values and culture in fire and rescue services

Values and culture in fire and rescue services remains a focus for HMICFRS, LFRS had already been working proactively in terms of promoting its values and engendering an organisational culture where all employees can thrive. LFRS submitted our report on the progress the service is making regarding the HMICFRS and National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) recommendations in relation to values and culture in December 2023.

HMICFRS Autumn Data Collection

LFRS submitted the Autumn data return in November 2023. HMICFRS requested a very in depth return in relation to the "Misconduct" and "Complaints" section in comparison to previous data returns.

Business risk

The inspection will monitor LFRS's direction of travel since 2022, it could cause reputational damage if it is perceived that we have not made reasonable progress.

Sustainability or Environmental Impact

None

Equality and Diversity Implications

None

Data Protection (GDPR)

None

HR implications

None

Financial implications

None

Legal implications

None

Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985

List of background papers

Paper:

Date:

Contact:

Reason for inclusion in Part 2 if appropriate: