

# **Lancashire Combined Fire Authority**

## **Planning Committee**

Meeting to be held on Monday 14 July 2025

### **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) 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:**

LFRS HMICFRS Round 3 inspection commenced on 20th January 2025, initiated by a request for a collection of documents, a self-assessment proforma and three surveys (staff survey, human resources survey and a trade union survey) to assist with preparation for the fieldwork phase of the inspection. This was succeeded by a three-week period of staff engagement, during which two weeks were conducted on-site throughout the organisation. The final week was conducted remotely with the department heads.

On Friday, 28 March 2025, the strategic brief was presented by Chief Fire Officer (CFO) Jon Charters, Deputy Chief Fire Officer (DCFO) Steve Healey, and Director of People and Development Liz Sandiford. It was an opportunity for our Service to brief the HMI and service liaison lead, providing a summary of performance, achievements, and work completed on previous areas of improvement. Following the brief, the Chair of the Fire Authority was interviewed.

The feedback from the HMICFRS inspection acknowledged that every staff member they interacted with was highly engaging, and they felt genuinely welcomed throughout the organisation.

The Service has recently received the draft inspection report, which affords us the opportunity to conduct factual accuracy checks. The release of the official final report is anticipated in early August, following this we will focus on addressing any areas for improvement that may have been identified and continuing our journey towards outstanding.

HMICFRS have now published 38 Round 3 inspection reports.

A summary of the gradings for all 38 Fire and Rescue Services (FRSs) inspected so far in Round 3 including a comparison against Round 2, can be found below. The remaining 6 reports are undergoing due process before being published.

	Effectiveness	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	Efficiency	Making best use of resources	Making the fire and rescue service affordable now and in the future	People	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

Key	Outstanding	Good	Adequate	Requires Improvement	Inadequate
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		<b>Effectiveness</b>				
		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
Lincs. Round 3		A	A	RI	G	G
Lincs. Round 2		RI	RI	RI	G	G
Manchester. Round 3:		G	G	G	G	A
Manchester. Round 2:		G	RI	RI	G	RI
Norfolk. Round 3:		G	RI	A	A	G
Norfolk. Round 2:		G	I	G	G	G
Essex. Round 3:		G	G	RI	RI	A
Essex. Round 2:		G	RI	RI	RI	RI
Glos. Round 3:		RI	A	I	A	RI
Glos. Round 2:		RI	RI	RI	RI	RI
West Yorks. Round 3:		G	RI	A	G	G
West Yorks. Round 2:		G	RI	RI	G	G
Oxford. Round 3:		A	A	A	A	A
Oxford. Round 2:		G	G	G	RI	G
Northampts. Round 3:		A	RI	G	A	G
Northampts. Round 2:		G	G	G	G	G
Notts. Round 3:		G	G	A	G	G
Notts. Round 2:		G	G	G	G	G
Staffs. Round 3:		G	A	A	G	O
Staffs. Round 2:		G	G	G	G	G

	<b>Efficiency</b>	
	Making best use of resources	Making the fire and rescue service affordable now and in the future
Lincs. Round 3	A	A
Lincs. Round 2	RI	G
Manchester. Round 3:	G	G
Manchester. Round 2:	RI	G
Norfolk. Round 3:	A	G
Norfolk. Round 2:	RI	RI
Essex. Round 3:	RI	G
Essex. Round 2:	RI	RI
Glos. Round 3:	RI	RI
Glos. Round 2:	RI	RI
West Yorks. Round 3:	A	G
West Yorks. Round 2:	G	G
Oxford. Round 3:	RI	A
Oxford. Round 2:	G	G
Northampts. Round 3:	A	G
Northampts. Round 2:	G	G
Notts. Round 3:	G	G
Notts. Round 2:	G	G
Staffs. Round 3:	G	G
Staffs. Round 2:	G	G

	<b>People</b>			
	Promoting the right values and culture	Getting the right people with the right skills	Ensuring fairness and promoting diversity	Managing performance and developing leaders
Lincs. Round 3	RI	G	RI	RI
Lincs. Round 2	G	RI	RI	RI
Manchester. Round 3:	G	G	G	G
Manchester. Round 2:	G	G	G	RI
Norfolk. Round 3:	A	RI	A	RI
Norfolk. Round 2:	RI	RI	RI	RI
Essex. Round 3:	RI	RI	RI	A
Essex. Round 2:	RI	RI	RI	RI
Glos. Round 3:	I	RI	I	RI
Glos. Round 2:	I	RI	I	RI
West Yorks. Round 3:	A	G	G	G
West Yorks. Round 2:	G	G	G	G
Oxford. Round 3:	RI	A	RI	RI
Oxford. Round 2:	G	RI	G	RI
Northampts. Round 3:	RI	A	RI	A
Northampts. Round 2:	RI	G	RI	RI
Notts. Round 3:	G	G	G	G
Notts. Round 2:	G	G	G	G
Staffs. Round 3:	G	G	A	A
Staffs. Round 2:	O	G	G	G

Key	Outstanding	Good	Adequate	Requires Improvement	Inadequate
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	Effectiveness	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	Efficiency	Making best use of resources	Making the fire and rescue service affordable now and in the future	People	Promoting the right values and culture	Getting the right people with the right skills	Ensuring fairness and promoting diversity	Managing performance and developing leaders
W. Sussex. Round 3:		G	G	G	A	A		G	A		A	G	A	A
W. Sussex. Round 2:		G	RI	RI	G	RI		G	G		RI	G	RI	RI
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
Dorset & Wilts. Round 3:		G	RI	A	G	A		G	G		A	G	RI	RI
Dorset & Wilts. Round 2:		G	G	G	G	G		O	G		G	O	G	G
Tyne & Wear. Round 3:		A	A	G	A	G		A	A		A	A	RI	A
Tyne & Wear. Round 2:		G	G	G	G	G		G	G		G	G	RI	RI
London. Round 3:		G	G	A	G	O		G	G		A	A	A	RI
London. Round 2:		RI	RI	RI	RI	RI		RI	RI		RI	RI	RI	RI
Shropshire. Round 3:		G	A	RI	A	A		I	RI		RI	RI	RI	RI
Shropshire. Round 2:		G	G	G	G	G		G	G		G	G	G	G

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	Effectiveness	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
Humberside Round 3:		O	O	G	G	G
Humberside Round 2:		G	G	G	G	G

Hertfordshire Round 3		A	I	RI	RI	G
Hertfordshire Round 2		RI	RI	G	G	G
Suffolk Round 3		RI	G	G	RI	A
Suffolk Round 2		G	RI	G	G	G
Isles of Scilly Round 3		A	A	G	G	N/A
Isles of Scilly Round 2		G	G	G	G	N/A

Cleveland. Round 3:		G	RI	RI	A	G
Cleveland. Round 2:		G	G	G	G	G

Leicestershire. Round 3:		G	G	G	G	G
Leicestershire. Round 2:		G	G	G	G	G

Royal Berkshire Round 3:		G	G	G	G	G
Royal Berkshire. Round 2:		G	G	G	G	G

Devon & Somerset Round 3:		G	RI	A	G	G
Devon & Somerset. Round 2:		G	G	G	G	G

Efficiency	Making best use of resources	Making the fire and rescue service affordable now and in the future
	G	G
	G	G

	RI	G
	RI	RI
	RI	RI
	RI	G
	G	G
	RI	G

	G	G
	G	G

	RI	RI
	RI	G

	A	A
	G	G

	A	A
	G	RI

People	Promoting the right values and culture	Getting the right people with the right skills	Ensuring fairness and promoting diversity	Managing performance and developing leaders
	A	G	G	G
	G	G	RI	G

	A	RI	A	G
	G	G	RI	G
	A	RI	RI	A
	G	G	RI	RI
	G	G	RI	G
	G	G	RI	RI

	RI	A	A	A
	G	G	G	G

	RI	A	RI	G
	G	G	G	G

	G	G	G	A
	G	G	G	G

	RI	RI	RI	RI
	RI	G	RI	RI

	Effectiveness	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	Efficiency	Making best use of resources	Making the fire and rescue service affordable now and in the future	People	Promoting the right values and culture	Getting the right people with the right skills	Ensuring fairness and promoting diversity	Managing performance and developing leaders
West Mids Round 3:		G	A	G	G	G		A	RI		A	RI	A	RI
West Mids Round 2:		O	G	G	O	G		G	G		G	G	G	G
Derbyshire Round 3		G	G	G	G	G		G	G		G	A	G	RI
Derbyshire Round 2		G	G	G	G	G		G	G		G	RI	RI	RI
EastSussex Round 3		G	RI	G	A	A		G	G		A	G	A	G
EastSussex Round 2		G	G	G	G	G		G	G		RI	G	RI	G
North Yorkshire Round 3		G	G	A	G	A		G	A		A	G	A	A
North Yorkshire Round 2		G	G	G	G	G		I	RI		RI	I	RI	RI
Lancashire Round 3		Awaiting Report						Awaiting Report			Awaiting Report			
Lancashire Round 2		G	G	G	G	G		G	G		O	G	G	G

## HMICFRS Inspection 2025-27 Update:

The FRS 2025-27 inspection programme will involve a number of changes from the previous round. These include the following:

### a) Reduction in diagnostic questions:

In previous rounds of inspections, HMICFRS assessed and gave graded judgments for 11 diagnostic questions, which came under 3 principle questions. For the 2025-27 inspection programme, the 3 principle questions have remained the same, HMICFRS have reduced the overall number of diagnostic questions to 10 by combining the efficiency questions. This is to reduce duplication and concentrate more on outcomes for communities and the workforce.

### b) Characteristics of good:

In the FRS 2025-27 inspections, the HMICFRS will measure fire and rescue services against the characteristics of good performance. These characteristics describe the levels of performance a FRS needs to achieve to be graded 'good'. The characteristics of good have been updated for the forthcoming inspections to reflect all of the changes.

### c) Impact of Governance on FRSs:

In the FRS 2025-27 inspections, the HMICFRS will look more closely at the governance arrangements and how services are impacted by their governance. They will not inspect the governing authority, only the impact of governance on the FRS.

When assessing effectiveness, they will now assess how governance impacts the effectiveness of the FRS and examine how FRS work with local communities to make them more resilient. In their assessment of efficiency, they will assess how each FRS is affected by its FRA's governance, oversight and scrutiny arrangements. In their assessment of how well the FRS looks after their people, they will assess whether the governance and scrutiny arrangements create a positive culture, and whether standards of conduct exist to support the health and well-being of the workforce.

#### **d) Leadership:**

The assessment of how each FRS looks after its people will focus on leadership at all levels of the organisation. They have enhanced the leadership questions, and as part of the overall summary, the HMI will set out the most important findings relating to the service's leadership.

The FRS Inspection Schedule for 2025-27 has been published, and the dates for the inspection program will be released in three phases. The initial phase of the schedule will commence with the inspection of Bedfordshire FRS in July 2025. Currently, LFRS are listed as the last service to undergo inspection, although this is subject to potential amendments.

### **HMICFRS Standards of behaviour: The handling of misconduct in fire and rescue services**

HMICFRS published their 'Standards of behaviour: The handling of misconduct in fire and rescue services' report in August 2024. This followed the detailed inspection of 10 FRSs, as well as analysing data provided by all 44 FRSs in England about their grievance and discipline cases.

LFRS have now been onboarded on to the HMICFRS Monitoring Portal and the service have completed the 15 recommendations and uploaded all evidence to the new Monitoring Portal.

### **Values and culture in Fire and Rescue Services**

Values and culture in Fire and Rescue Services remains a focus for HMICFRS, LFRS continues to work proactively in terms of promoting its values and engendering an organisational culture where all employees can thrive.

LFRS have now been onboarded on to the HMICFRS Monitoring Portal and have submitted evidence to close all recommendations applicable to the Service.

### **HMICFRS Service Liaison Officer (SLO) event**

An online Service Liaison Officer event was held on 12 June 2025. This event allowed SLOs to receive an update on the changes to the 2025-27 FRS inspection methodology, and to clarify any issues and answer any questions that they may have about the new inspection programme. This was attended by Area Manager Tom Powell and Group Manager Emma Price.

### **Joint Fire and Rescue Service and Policing positive practise event**

The first joint Fire and Rescue Service and Policing positive practise event was held on 19 June 2025 at the College of Policing, Ryton-on-Dunsmore. The agenda focused on

Culture, Leadership and Misconduct and provided opportunities for the different sectors to learn from one another to improve this mutually challenging area. The event was attended by CFO Jon Charters, who presented alongside former CFO Justin Johnston on the LFRS journey.

### **HMICFRS Autumn Data Collection**

The Spring Data Return closed on Friday 30 May 2025. LFRS submitted the return on time with no issues or queries received.

### **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: