



HAMPSHIRE  
FIRE AND  
RESCUE  
AUTHORITY

## Standards and Governance Committee

Purpose: Noted

Date: 23 July 2020

Title: **HMICFRS 2018/19 ACTION PLAN & 2020 INSPECTION UPDATE PROGRESS REPORT**

Report of Chief Fire Officer

### SUMMARY

1. This report provides the Standards and Governance Committee with an overview of the progress that the Service has made in respect of the Action Plan resulting from the findings of Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) Inspection Report, which was published in December 2018.
2. The report provides members with an update on actions that have closed since the last report to Standards and Governance Committee, as well as any actions that remain open beyond their due date, due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. We have now closed all of the 41 HFRS actions.
3. In April 2020, owing to the May Committee meeting's cancellation, we provided an HMICFRS action plan and inspection readiness report to the Committee chair (see Appendix A). There are no further updates on 2020 Inspection Readiness activities since the last report to Standards and Governance Committee Chair in May 2020. We continue to regularly engage with the Service Liaison Lead.

### BACKGROUND

4. The HMICFRS Action Plan follow-up and monitoring process is an important part of our overall approach to continuous improvement within the Service, and evidences our performance in respect of efficiency, effectiveness and looking after our people. When an activity has been incorporated into the Action Plan to address an area for improvement identified by the Inspectorate, it is important that the activity is then implemented as planned.
5. HFRS has appointed Strategic Leads in respect of each of the diagnostic areas as accountable owners for progression of improvement work. These

Strategic Leads (all Directors) have assigned Action Owners, typically at a department head level, to progress specific actions. A comprehensive system has been created to enable the accurate tracking of progress of each diagnostic and their actions.

6. A dashboard was created to support reporting to the HFRS Integrated Performance and Assurance Board (IPAB), the Standards and Governance Committee, and the Isle of Wight Council's Corporate Scrutiny Committee. Progress is also routinely discussed at Executive Group meetings.

#### 2018/2019 HMICFRS ACTION PLAN LATEST UPDATE

##### CLOSED DIAGNOSTICS

7. All of the 22 diagnostics have been completed and closed.
8. The following diagnostics were completed since the last update to Standards and Governance in May 2020:
9. ***"The Service does not do enough to be an inclusive employer."***
10. The only outstanding element of this diagnostic since the last update related to the roll-out of the Inclusion and Diversity initiative 'A Bit More' training to all staff and teams, which had been halted owing to COVID-19. Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, this training was in the process of being trialled, with the intention to launch by the end of March 2020. However, under the current circumstances, this has been replaced by virtual training, which has been launched at the beginning of July.
11. A significant amount work has been delivered since the 'Cause for Concern' was identified and the Inclusion Network groups FireABLE, FireINSPIRE, FireREACH and FireOUT, continue to make a huge contribution to enabling the Service to adapt and improve in this area and to ensure that the actions we have taken are having the desired effect.
12. ***"The Service should assure itself that staff are confident using its feedback mechanisms, so these help the Service gather valuable information."***
13. In respect of POD Framework, there is now specific information available on the HFRS intranet and portal to provide clarity for staff.
14. The work to refine the PDR recording tool has now been completed, with, as at mid-June, 83 managers having used the tool (resulting in 265 forms completed) since its launch in May 2020.

15. “**The Service should ensure it has an effective system in place to manage staff development, performance, promotion and productivity.**”
16. To re-emphasise points raised in paragraph 29 of Appendix A, an evaluation of grey book promotion processes (supported by candidate and managers surveys, and a range of other evaluation methods) concluded that documented processes have been put in place with clear guidance and great effort has been taken to ensure that the processes were carried out fairly, consistently and communicated to all potential candidates at the earliest opportunity.
17. This has now been supplemented by additional analysis of survey data on how managers and staff ‘feel’ about the process:
  - The survey of managers who had recently received a promoted candidate from the promotions processes (9 respondents), found that 89% (8 out of 9) felt the process was effective at selecting the right individuals.
  - A survey of 43 candidates (21 unsuccessful and 22 successful) following the conclusion of these processes, rated the fairness of the process 3.1 out of 5 with those who were successful, rating the process 4.1 and those unsuccessful 2.1. Candidates, however, rated the transparency of the process slightly higher with 3.4 out of 5. Those who were successful rated the process 4.3 and those unsuccessful 2.5. Other feedback from candidates has been very positive during the most recent Crew and Watch Manager promotions processes. This feedback demonstrates that changes made to the processes has been recognised by staff as a positive improvement.
18. This report has been shared with key stakeholders internally and will be reported to the Integrated Performance and Assurance Board.

#### SUPPORTING OUR SAFETY PLAN AND PRIORITIES

19. The HMICFRS inspection report highlights areas of risk and supports the following Safety Plan priorities:
  - a) *Public Value* – to ensure our decisions and actions deliver efficient and effective public services against the HMICFRS Inspection Framework.
  - b) *Learning and Improving* – in that we use the findings of the inspection programme to ensure we make improvements where required and learning from other fire and rescues services that performed well in specific areas.

## RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

20. Delivery of the Action Plan is planned into existing organisational resources, however where the inspection identified required improvements, specifically around looking after people, organisational restructures are being developed to ensure that resources are being concentrated where they are most needed.

## ENVIRONMENTAL AND SUSTAINABILITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

21. There are no anticipated positive or negative impacts to the environment or sustainability arising from this report.

## LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

22. There are no legal implications arising from this report.

## PEOPLE IMPACT ASSESSMENT

23. The contents of this report are considered compatible with the provisions of equality and human rights legislation.

## OPTIONS

24. To approve or not the closure of the Hampshire Fire and Rescue Service (HFRS) HMICFRS Action Plan.
25. Approving the closure of the action plan will ensure that Hampshire Fire and Rescue Authority (HFRA) receives assurance on the Service's performance and is able to scrutinise the Service on behalf of Hampshire's communities.

## RISK ANALYSIS

26. Failure to deliver actions committed to within the HMICFRS Action Plan leaves the Authority exposed to the risk of a fire and rescue service with declining organisational performance.
27. The HMICFRS Action Plan is a key element of ensuring that the Service continues to improve and to deliver benefits to communities in Hampshire. The updates on progress of the Action Plan ensure that Members are fully aware of any problems associated with addressing the issues raised and the priority given to driving down or eliminating specific risks.
28. Failure to adequately prepare for and deliver the key aspects of the Inspection Readiness Plan will leave the Service at risk for this year's HMICFRS Inspection.

## EVALUATION

29. The HMICFRS Action Plan process is continuously reviewed to ensure the most effective approach is taken to implement the HMICFRS recommendations for continuous improvement. Evidence against completed actions is reviewed and validated.

## CONCLUSION

30. The Service has created a robust monitoring and assurance process to support progress of all activities within the HMICFRS Action Plan, with all 41 actions now completed.
31. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, all inspection activity in service's has been suspended until further notice, but the inspectorate continues to review documents and data that they have been sent, for example from any data and document returns already completed. In addition to this, some remote engagement is now beginning to take place through telephone calls and video conferencing including a meeting between the Service Liaison Lead and Chief Fire Officer, Neil Odin. We continue to engage virtually with colleagues across the organisations, as much as possible, so that we are fully prepared for the inspection once HMICFRS activity resumes.

## RECOMMENDATION

32. That the HFRA Standards and Governance Committee approve the closure of the HFRS HMICFRS Action Plan.

## APPENDICES

33. **Appendix A – HMICFRS 2018/19 ACTION PLAN & 2020 INSPECTION READINESS PROGRESS REPORT, 20 April**

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