

CHESHIRE FIRE AUTHORITY

MEETING OF: PERFORMANCE AND OVERVIEW COMMITTEE
DATE: 22ND NOVEMBER 2023
REPORT OF: HEAD OF SERVICE IMPROVEMENT
AUTHOR: GM AARON COLLIS

SUBJECT: HMICFRS 2023 INSPECTION ACTION PLAN

Purpose of Report

1. To update Members of the proposed action plan to resolve areas for improvement (AFIs) identified in the Service's 2023 HMICFRS inspection report.

Recommended: That

- [1] Members note the contents of the report.

Background

2. The previous Action Plan from the 2021 HMICFRS inspection was signed off in July 2023 following confirmation in our published report that eight of the nine AFIs had now been satisfied.
3. The inspection team found that insufficient progress had been made in one AFI (relating to operational learning); this remains as an AFI in the 2023 report. It should be noted that failure to resolve this area in a third inspection would present the risk of the Service being issued with a more serious 'Cause of Concern'.

Information

4. In the latest report, HMICFRS graded the service as 'Good' in six diagnostic areas and 'Adequate' in five others. They also identified an area of Innovative Practice relating to the way in which we develop the career pathways of Green Book staff. Within each of the adequate grades we were issued with an 'Area for Improvement' (AFI); this is where inspectors have identified a weakness and provide a recommendation for the Service to resolve the issue in advance of a future inspection which is likely to take place in 2025.
5. The Action Plan attached as Appendix 1 includes proposed actions to resolve each of the five AFIs. The Service Improvement department will track the

progress against each AFI and provide regular updates on progress to Members.

Financial Implications

6. None.

Legal Implications

7. None.

Equality and Diversity Implications

8. None.

Environmental Implications

9. None.

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BACKGROUND PAPERS: NONE

APPENDICES:

Appendix A – HMICFRS Action Plan

Appendix A - HMICFRS Round 3 Inspection Action Plan

	Area for Improvement	Responsible HoD	Status
	The service should make sure it gathers and records relevant and up-to-date risk information to help protect firefighters, the public and property during an emergency.	AM Tony O'Dwyer	Open
	Actions	Progress and Evidence	Due Dates
1.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evaluate the monthly SSRI performance report to ensure Station Managers have the necessary information to ensure completion of re-inspections with planned timescales. Undertake a detailed review of Op/Plan/15 Site Specific Risk Information to ensure this document provides sufficient guidance and oversight for the risk information process. Review how the risk footprint process is conducted to ensure consistency between sites in different areas. Review the quality assurance framework. Introducing a more robust quality assurance/peer review process. Reviewing the risk scoring and reinspection programme (and consider returning to 1,3 and 5-year inspection frequencies). Review how the service quality assures the contents of over the border risk information. 	<p>This area of work is encompassed within the Premises Risk Identification Group. The team have reviewed the actions and have a targeted plan to address the areas of improvement identified following the recent HMICFRS report.</p> <p>A small task and finish group has evaluated the impact of the current low and high-risk categories and are currently compiling a report to be presented to SLT in December with proposals for change.</p> <p>The service is considering how it can improve the quality of over the border risk information with some improvements identified and suggestions for enhancements made; however, the responsibility for producing SSRIs and the associated quality, remains the responsibility of each service. CFRS have limited ability to influence the quality of SSRIs conducted by other FRSs.</p>	April 2024

	Area for Improvement		Responsible HoD	Status
	The service should make sure it allocates enough resources to meet its prevention strategy.		AM Steve McCormick	Open
1.2	Actions	Progress and Evidence	Due Dates	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete the Service Improvement Review of the Prevention department. • Implement the review outcomes and new structure within Prevention and recruit to all vacant posts. • Review our Safe & Well target for the 2024/25 year in accordance with changes to the structure and introduction of new data sources to improve the targeting methodology. 	Good progress has been made with the departmental review, with a proposed new structure awaiting agreement by SLT.	April 2024	

	Area for Improvement	Responsible HoD	Status
	The service should make sure it has an effective system for learning from operational incidents.	AM Tony O'Dwyer	Open
1.4	Actions	Progress and Evidence	Due Dates
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review the structure and allocation of roles within OPA to improve ownership of the operational learning which is currently spread across several different posts. Review the SI and Policy documents associated with debriefing, specifically ensuring that the requirement criteria for a structured debrief remains suitable and proportionate. Improve the methodology used to record, track and monitor improvements and actions identified through the Operational Learning Group. 	<p>The Operational Learning Group are addressing the actions identified within the meeting structure and considering how best to deliver the improvements identified.</p> <p>Plans are in place to secure an Organisational Learning board which will be chaired by the Assistant Chief Fire Officer.</p> <p>NWFC are included in all structured operational debriefs and are included in several operational exercises planned for 2023/4.</p>	April 2024

	Area for Improvement	Responsible HoD	Status
	The service should make sure it has an effective method for sharing multiple fire survival guidance information with multiple callers and that it has a dedicated communication link in place	AM Tony O'Dwyer	Open
	Actions	Progress and Evidence	Due Dates
1.5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resource and implement an electronic solution to be used by North West Fire Control (NWFC) to communicate the location and status of callers in an immediate building evacuation scenario. • Test and exercise the application of the electronic solution to provide assurance it can be used successfully. • In conjunction with the Command Support Vehicle project consider which teams will specialise in the IBE process in the future to best support the resolution of incidents. 	Discussions are ongoing within the NWFC Mobilising and Communications Sub-Committee to identify and procure a regional solution for this AFI; this is complicated by the fact that not all FRSs use the same MDT gateway meaning the provision of information via a dedicated application will need significant technical investment.	April 2024

	Area for Improvement	Responsible HoD	Status
	The service should assure itself it has adequate resources available for future industrial action.	AM Tony O'Dwyer	Open
	Actions	Progress and Evidence	Due Dates
2.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement the 'Operational Resilience Team' contracts which were proposed for internal staff earlier in 2023. Re-commence recruitment of resilience Firefighters and implement a process to train and retain these staff on an ongoing basis. 	<p>The Service are monitoring the Minimum Service Levels legislation which has received royal ascent. The NFCC have issued a consultation document which the Service have provided a response.</p> <p>Dependent upon any guidance received, the Service will continue to monitor and implement a procedure to suit.</p> <p>The current ORT members have been briefed on developments.</p>	April 2024