

# CHESHIRE FIRE AUTHORITY

**MEETING OF:** CHESHIRE FIRE AUTHORITY  
**DATE:** 13 FEBRUARY 2019  
**REPORT OF:** HEAD OF PROTECTION AND ORGANISATIONAL  
PERFORMANCE  
**AUTHOR:** ANTHONY JONES

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**SUBJECT:** HMICFRS INSPECTION REPORT

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## Purpose of Report

1. To present the outcomes from the report about the inspection of Cheshire Fire and Rescue Service (CFRS) by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) in the summer of 2018.
2. To provide some context about areas of the inspection report
3. To explain how officers are intending to deal with the Areas for Improvement and report on progress.

## Recommended: That Members

- [1] Note the content of the inspection report.
- [2] Note the relative performance of the Service compared to the other services in the first tranche of inspections.
- [3] Confirm the progress reporting arrangements relating to the Action Plan referred to in paragraph 15.

## Background

4. HMICFRS was created by the Government to carry out independent inspections of all 45 English Fire and Rescues Services (FRSs) in 2018 and 2019. HMICFRS elected to inspect and report on individual Services in 3 groups and to produce an annual 'National Summary report' of the English FRSs.
5. The inspection process consisted of a wide variety of pre-inspection evidence gathering in the form of data and documents, a qualitative self-assessment prepared by CFRS and a strategic briefing delivered by the Service Management Team. Teams of inspectors also visited CFRS several times culminating in the week long inspection commencing 2<sup>nd</sup> July 2018. Inspectors gathered in excess of 1,000

pieces of evidence, engaging with over 160 members of staff across CFRS during all aspects of the inspection.

6. The inspection process asks three main questions designed to assess how effectively and efficiently CFRS protects the public as well as respond to fires and other emergencies. It also assesses how well CFRS looks after the people who work for the service.
  - a. Effectiveness - How effective is CFRS at keeping people safe and secure from fire and other risks?
  - b. Efficiency - How efficient in CFRS at keeping people safe and secure from fire and other risks?
  - c. People - How well does CFRS look after its people?
7. Underneath these main questions were 11 diagnostic questions. CFRS has received a graded judgement on each of the three main questions and eleven diagnostic questions.
8. The categories of graded judgements, based on the Ofsted model, are:
  - a. Outstanding – If policy, practice or performance exceeds what is expected of good, then consideration will be given to a graded judgement of outstanding.
  - b. Good – Is the ‘expected’ graded judgment, based on policy, practice or performance that meets pre-defined grading criteria that are informed by any relevant national operational guidance or standards.
  - c. Requires improvement – If there are shortcomings in the policy, practice or performance, then consideration will be given to a graded judgment of requires improvement.
  - d. Inadequate – If there are serious critical failings of policy, practice or performance, then consideration will be given to a graded judgment of inadequate.
9. In addition to the graded judgments HMICFRS may identify the following:
  - a. Causes of concern - Any serious or critical shortcoming of practice, policy or performance. HMICFRS will make a recommendation, or recommendations and review progress with a view to alleviating or eradicating the cause of concern.
  - b. Areas for Improvement - Less serious, falling short of expected standard of practice, policy or performance. These will not be accompanied by recommendations.

## Information

10. The inspection report contains an overview. From this the 'overall summary of inspection findings' is reproduced verbatim below:

***We are pleased with most aspects of the performance of Cheshire Fire and Rescue Service in keeping people safe and secure. But it needs to improve how it looks after its people, to give a consistently good service.***

***The service is effective at keeping people safe and secure. It understands risk and is good at preventing it. The service makes good use of fire regulation to protect the public. Its response to fires and emergencies locally is good, and it responds well to national risks, too.***

***The service is efficient. It uses resources well and it is affordable.***

***The service should improve the way it looks after its people. In particular, it must do better at:***

- ***promoting the right values and culture; and***
- ***ensuring fairness and promoting diversity.***

***But it is good at getting the right people with the right skills and at managing performance and developing leaders.***

***We are encouraged by the positive aspects we have identified. We look forward to seeing a more consistent performance over the coming year***

11. The full inspection report, which was released at the end of December 2018, can be found by following the link on the HMICFRS website.  
<https://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmicfrs/wp-content/uploads/cheshire-fire-and-rescue-service-report-2018-19.pdf>

12. Members may be interested to see how CFRS has performed against the other 13 fire and rescue services inspected in the first tranche. The table at Appendix 1 to this report shows the high-level ratings. As can be seen CFRS's performance suggests that it sits in third place on a fairly crude totting up of the graded judgments.
13. The following table contains the main questions with the respective overall grade and the diagnostic questions with respective gradings. Although HMICFRS found no Causes for Concern during its inspection of CFRS, it did find 9 Areas for Improvement. These are all set out in the table.

<b>How effective is CFRS at keeping people safe and secure from fire and other risks?</b>	
<b>Good Overall</b>	
1.1 – Understanding Risk of Fire and other emergencies	<b>Good</b>
1.2 – Preventing Fires and Other Risks	<b>Good</b>
1.3 – Protecting the public through fire regulation	<b>Good</b> Area for Improvement  The service should ensure it allocates enough resources to a prioritised and risk-based inspection programme.
1.4 – Responding to fires and other emergencies	<b>Good</b>
1.5 – Responding to national risks	<b>Good</b>
<b>How efficient in CFRS at keeping people safe and secure from fire and other risks?</b>	
<b>Good Overall</b>	
2.1 – Making best use of resources	<b>Good</b> Areas for improvement  The service should ensure there is effective monitoring, review and evaluation of the benefits and outcomes of any collaboration.  The service should ensure it has sufficiently robust plans in place to secure the right level of savings in the medium term

	by widening its scenario planning and testing for future financial forecasting.
2.2 – Making the fire and rescue service affordable now and in the future	<p><b>Good</b></p> <p>Area for improvement</p> <p>The service needs to demonstrate sound financial management of principal non-pay costs. It should use benchmarking data more widely and effectively.</p>
<p><b>How well does CFRS look after its people?</b></p> <p><b>Requires Improvement Overall</b></p>	
3.1 – Promoting the right values and culture	<p><b>Requires Improvement</b></p> <p>Areas for improvement</p> <p>The service should assure itself that staff understand and have confidence in the purpose and integrity of wellbeing policies, especially sickness.</p> <p>The service should take early action, such as monitoring overtime, to improve the wellbeing of staff.</p> <p>The service should assure itself that senior managers are visible to act as role models by demonstrating their commitment to service values through their behaviours.</p>
3.2 – Getting the right people with the right skills	<p><b>Good</b></p>
3.3 – Ensuring fairness and promoting diversity	<p><b>Requires Improvement</b></p> <p>Areas for improvement</p> <p>The service should ensure that leaders can demonstrate that they act on and have made changes as a direct result of feedback from staff.</p> <p>The service should improve communications between staff and senior managers, so queries and suggestions are responded to in a timely and appropriate way.</p>
3.4 – Managing performance and developing leaders	<p><b>Good</b></p>

14. Officers have prepared an outline Action Plan. This concentrates on the Areas for Improvement, but also incorporates other issues that have been commented on by

HMICFRS. Officers are using the inspection report as a means to improve rather than as an auditing exercise.

15. The intention is to present the Action Plan to the Performance and Overview Committee and report on progress to that Committee. The Action Plan will be used to evidence the actions that have been carried out to bring about the necessary improvements. This will not only help CFRS to improve, it will also be useful when HMICFRS returns.
16. HMICFRS does not require CFRS to supply it with a copy of the Action Plan. It is understood that this is because of the positive inspection outcome.

### **Financial Implications**

17. Given that some Areas for Improvement are concerned with financial issues there will undoubtedly be financial implications for the Authority. However, at this stage it is not entirely clear how some of these matters will be taken forward. Future reports may need to be presented to the Authority dealing with financial implications.

### **Legal Implications**

18. There are no legal implications at this stage. These may need to be picked up as the Action Plan activities develop.

### **Equality and Diversity Implications**

19. There are no equality and diversity implications at this stage. These may need to be picked up as the Action Plan activities develop.

### **Environmental Implications**

20. There are no environmental implications at this stage. These may need to be picked up as the Action Plan activities develop.

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**BACKGROUND PAPERS: CHESHIRE FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE HMICFRS  
INSPECTION REPORT – DECEMBER 2018 (PARAGRAPH 11 REFERS)**

# HMICFRS results overview of tranche 1 inspection 2018

	LANCASHIRE	CAMBRIDGESHIRE	CESHIRE	WARWICKSHIRE	HAMPSHIRE	ISLE OF WIGHT	LINCOLNSHIRE	HEREFORD & WORCS	CORNWALL	BEDFORDSHIRE	ISLES OF SCILLY	HERTFORDSHIRE	SURREY	AVON
<b>Effectiveness</b>	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good	Requires Improvement	Good	Good	Requires Improvement	Requires Improvement	Requires Improvement
Understanding the risk of fire and other emergencies	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good	Requires Improvement	Good	Good	Requires Improvement	Good	Good
Preventing fires and other risks	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good	Requires Improvement	Good	Requires Improvement	Good	Requires Improvement	Requires Improvement	Requires Improvement
Protecting the public through fire regulation	Good	Good	Good	Requires Improvement	Requires Improvement	Requires Improvement	Requires Improvement	Good	Requires Improvement	Requires Improvement	Requires Improvement	Good	Requires Improvement	Inadequate
Responding to fires and other emergencies	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good	Inadequate	Good	Good	Good	Good	Requires Improvement	Requires Improvement
Responding to national risks	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good	Inadequate	Good	Good	Good
<b>Efficiency</b>	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good	Requires Improvement	Requires Improvement	Requires Improvement	Good	Requires Improvement	Inadequate	Requires Improvement
Making best use of resources	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good	Requires Improvement	Requires Improvement	Requires Improvement	Good	Requires Improvement	Inadequate	Requires Improvement
Making the fire and rescue service affordable now and in the future	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good	Requires Improvement	Requires Improvement	Requires Improvement	Requires Improvement	Good
<b>People</b>	Good	Good	Requires Improvement	Good	Requires Improvement	Requires Improvement	Requires Improvement	Requires Improvement	Inadequate					
Promoting the right values and culture	Outstanding	Good	Requires Improvement	Good	Requires Improvement	Requires Improvement	Requires Improvement	Requires Improvement	Good	Requires Improvement	Requires Improvement	Requires Improvement	Requires Improvement	Inadequate
Getting the right people with the right skills	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good	Requires Improvement	Good	Good	Good	Requires Improvement	Requires Improvement	Requires Improvement	Good
Ensuring fairness and promoting diversity	Good	Good	Requires Improvement	Requires Improvement	Requires Improvement	Requires Improvement	Good	Requires Improvement	Good	Requires Improvement	Requires Improvement	Requires Improvement	Requires Improvement	Inadequate
Managing performance and developing leaders	Good	Good	Good	Requires Improvement	Good	Requires Improvement								

