



Buckinghamshire & Milton Keynes Fire Authority

MEETING	Fire Authority
DATE OF MEETING	14 February 2018
OFFICER	Julian Parsons, Head of Service Development
LEAD MEMBER	Councillor Roger Reed
SUBJECT OF THE REPORT	Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	<p>Chapter four of the Policing and Crime Act 2017 established the legal framework for the inspection of English fire and rescue services (FRS). Wales and Scotland have their own mechanisms for assuring services. The Home Office subsequently awarded a contract to Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and consequently they changed their name to Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS).</p> <p>The HMICFRS then developed a framework for inspecting fire and rescue services, based in part on the framework they use for inspecting constabularies. The HMICFRS consulted with an Expert Reference Group (ERG) which contained stakeholders from the sector.</p> <p>The HMICFRS will be grading every FRS as follows: Outstanding, Good, Requires Improvement and Inadequate.</p> <p>A grade will be awarded for each of these three areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How efficient is the FRS at keeping people safe and secure from fire and other risks? • How effective is the FRS at keeping people safe and secure from fire and other risks? • How well does the FRS look after its people? <p>The inspection process will involve the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A self-assessment based on a series of diagnostic and sub diagnostics; • Provision of data to the HMICFRS; • A field visit undertaken by inspectors. This is expected to be an intense process where a number of inspectors spend a week in each Service testing it against the diagnostics; • An initial feedback session to senior managers; • Provision of a draft report allowing

	<p>confirmation or challenge of facts.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provision of a final report which will be published in the public domain. <p>The framework will be validated via a pilot inspection process embracing three FRS. One combined authority (Staffordshire), one county council (Suffolk) and one metropolitan service (West Yorkshire). These will take place early in 2018. This will then be followed by three inspection tranches comprising fifteen FRS in each. These are shown at Appendix B.</p> <p>Buckinghamshire FRS (BFRS) will be inspected in Tranche three in the Spring of 2019.</p> <p>On 19 December 2017 the HMICFRS invited FRSs to consult on the framework and methodology for inspections. The letter, framework and methodology are attached as Appendix C, D and E. BFRS's response is attached as Appendix F.</p>
ACTION	Decision.
RECOMMENDATIONS	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. That the content of the report be noted. 2. That the response to the formal consultation on the framework (Appendix F) be agreed.
RISK MANAGEMENT	<p>There are reputational corporate risks to the organisation should we be graded as inadequate. The Service has already taken steps to mitigate this through having extensive internal and external audits of a number of areas of the Service. Notably, our operations have been subject to external independent assurance. Our Health, Safety and Wellbeing function has been independently audited by the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents and received a Gold Award.</p>
FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS	<p>FRS are not funded for burden and preparation resource implications of HMICFRS visit, nor is the Service charged. This round of inspections is funded by the Home Office. The Police are top sliced from their government grants to fund the HMICFRS inspections of constabulary. There has been no mention yet that this might be a future funding model for the inspection of FRS.</p>
LEGAL IMPLICATIONS	<p>The powers of inspection of FRS are established by the Policing and Crime Act 2017. There is no contractual relationship between BFRS or HMICFRS. There are no specific legal functions or liabilities anticipated at this time.</p>
CONSISTENCY WITH THE PRINCIPLES OF THE DUTY TO	<p>Though this is something each Service has to plan and deliver individually, officers have been working with Darlington and Thames Valley Police Services in order to understand how they have achieved Outstanding</p>

COLLABORATE	grades for efficiency.
HEALTH AND SAFETY	There are no Health, Safety or Wellbeing implications anticipated. This area is subject to inspectorate scrutiny.
EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY	There are no Equality and Diversity implications expected as part of the process. This area is subject to inspectorate scrutiny.
USE OF RESOURCES	<p>A preparation plan has been devised for the Service. This can be viewed at Appendix G. The preparations for HMICFRS is being led by the Head of Service Development.</p> <p>Communication with stakeholders; A Stakeholder engagement exercise has been carried out and points of communication with Members and staff has been programmed into the preparation plan.</p> <p>The system of internal control; Specific areas identified for service improvement have been identified through a number of workshops. These are being captured in relevant departmental plans and the Operational Assurance Plan. These will be reported on in the usual way and ultimately to the Executive Committee.</p> <p>The medium term financial strategy; No implications for the strategy are identified at this time. There may be future implications depending on the long term funding model adopted for the HMICFRS.</p> <p>The balance between spending and resources; No new human resources have been identified as being required to prepare for inspection. The Corporate Planning Manager is overseeing preparation of evidence gathering with support from the Service's Business Continuity and Resilience Manager. The Viper system has been designed to capture evidence on an ongoing basis. This allows managers to provide evidence as part of their usual reporting process. Further scrutiny of the progress against the delivery of the corporate plan is provided by the Performance Management Board.</p> <p>The ethos of the Service will be to continue to deliver the Service's vision and strategic aims and gather the relevant evidence for the HMICFRS as business as usual rather than an extra burden.</p> <p>While we develop an understanding of the inspection process and monitor the experience and effect on other Services we will revisit the resourcing needs.</p> <p>We have identified that preparations for aspects of the new Public Safety Plan (PSP) due in 2020 need to be closely aligned with preparations for the HMICFRS.</p>

	This is reflected in the plan.
PROVENANCE SECTION & BACKGROUND PAPERS	Background Chapter four of the Policing and Crime Act 2017 established the legal framework for the inspection of English fire and rescue services. Wales and Scotland have their own mechanisms for assuring services. The Home Office subsequently awarded a contract to Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and consequently they changed their name to Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services.
APPENDICES	Appendix A- Letter from HMICFRS 8 December 2017 Appendix B- FRS Inspection Tranches Appendix C-Letter from HMICFRS 19 December 2017 Appendix D-FRS Inspection Programme and framework consultation-2018-19 Appendix E- Draft Inspection Methodology Appendix F- HMICFRS BFRS Response Appendix G- HMICFRS-PSP Preparation Plan
TIME REQUIRED	15 Minutes
REPORT ORIGINATOR AND CONTACT	Stuart Gowanlock sgowanlock@bucksfire.gov.uk 01296 744435