



Buckinghamshire & Milton Keynes Fire Authority

MEETING	Fire Authority
DATE OF MEETING	13 February 2019
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 – Preparation Update
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	<p>On 20 December 2018, Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) published their first wave of reports on completion of the first of three tranches of Fire and Rescue Service (FRS) inspections.</p> <p>A summary of overall tranche one findings was also published and can be found at Appendix 1.</p> <p>The individual reports for each Service inspected can be found here:</p> <p>[https://www.justiceinspectrates.gov.uk/hmicfrs/news/news-feed/frs-inspections-2018-19-tranche-1-service-press-releases/].</p> <p>The report's findings are summarised as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overall most FRS are operationally effective, with ten judged to be good and four requiring improvement. • Generally, FRS were effective in keeping the public safe, but the report detailed concerns over the way FRS regulate fire safety, with fire safety audits having almost halved (down 42 per cent) since 2010/11. In this respect, there were eight FRS requiring improvement and one Service was found to be inadequate, with many teams understaffed and under-resourced. • Half of the FRS were judged to be good at how they use resources to manage risk and how well they are using their resources to ensure they are affordable now and in the future. Five Services require improvement and one Service was found to be inadequate. The report also noted that some FRS carried very high levels of reserves that should be used to invest in things that will help them to become more efficient in the future. Inspectors found that some Services had outdated processes and systems in place that prevented staff being as productive as they

	<p>could otherwise be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The area of greatest concern highlighted in the report was how staff were treated in FRSs. Only three were graded as good, with ten requiring improvement and one judged to be inadequate. A particular concern highlighted in the report, is an environment, in which inspectors were present, where insensitive and inappropriate language was used and in which they were told of autocratic and domineering behaviour by managers. The report emphasises that Services needed to significantly improve the organisational culture in which staff work, encourage diversity and develop talent to ensure that the public is better served. <p>Officers are now examining the reports to see what lessons can be identified to help improve our services and also prepare for inspection.</p>
ACTION	Noting
RECOMMENDATIONS	That the report is noted.
RISK MANAGEMENT	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.
FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS	FRS are not funded for the 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.
LEGAL IMPLICATIONS	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.
CONSISTENCY WITH THE PRINCIPLES OF THE DUTY TO COLLABORATE	Though this is something each Service has to plan and deliver individually, officers have been working on our approach in consultation with our Thames Valley FRS partners and with 'peer' support from Thames Valley and Gloucestershire Police Forces.

<p>HEALTH AND SAFETY</p>	<p>There are no Health, Safety or Wellbeing implications anticipated. This area is subject to inspectorate scrutiny.</p>
<p>EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY</p>	<p>There are no Equality and Diversity implications expected as part of the preparation process. However, performance in this area is subject to inspectorate scrutiny and assessment.</p>
<p>USE OF RESOURCES</p>	<p>A preparation plan was devised for the Service and presented to the Fire Authority on 14 February 2018. The preparations for HMICFRS are 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 in the Operational Assurance Plan. These will be reported on in the usual way and ultimately to the Overview and Audit 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 for 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 progress towards 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 on a business as usual basis 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. This is reflected in the plan.</p>

<p>PROVENANCE SECTION & BACKGROUND PAPERS</p>	<p>Background</p> <p>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.</p> <p>Our preparation plans together with our response to HMICFRS’ consultation on the inspection methodology was presented to, and considered at, the 14 February 2018 Fire Authority meeting (see pages 131 – 162):</p> <p>https://bucksfire.gov.uk/files/9615/1782/8239/FIRE_AUTHORITY_AGENDA_AND_REPORTS_140218-min.pdf</p>
<p>APPENDICES</p>	<p>Appendix 1: Fire and Rescue Service Inspections 2018/2019: Summary of Findings from Tranche 1</p>
<p>TIME REQUIRED</p>	<p>10 Minutes</p>
<p>REPORT ORIGINATOR AND CONTACT</p>	<p>Stuart Gowanlock – Corporate Planning Manager sgowanlock@bucksfire.gov.uk 01296 744435</p>