



Buckinghamshire & Milton Keynes Fire Authority

Meeting and date: Extraordinary Fire Authority, 11 September 2024

Report title: His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) – Standards of Behaviour

Lead Member: Councillor Simon Rouse, Chairman

Report sponsor: Chief Fire Officer, Louise Harrison

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Action: Decision

Recommendations:

- 1) That the Fire Authority should accept the recommendations allocated to the Chief Fire Officer in full.
- 2) That the Fire Authority should accept the recommendations allocated to the Fire and Rescue Authority in full.
- 3) That the Service will fully engage and support the delivery of the remaining Recommendations.

Executive summary:

On 1 August 2024 His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) published 'Standards of behaviour: The handling of misconduct in fire and rescue services'. The report has 4 themes supported by 15 recommendations and the HMICFRS's view is that the findings and recommendations in this report can provide practical steps that services can take to bring about the lasting change fire and rescue service staff and the public deserve.

Of the 15 recommendations, all are owned by the Chief Fire Officer with 2 also joint owned with the Fire Authority. Work has already started on a number of these recommendations

An Action plan has been developed including success criteria, progress will be reviewed via the HMICFRS Improvement Board and presented to the Fire Authority on a regular basis.

The Action plan can be found in Appendix 1

Financial implications:

The prioritisation of improvements to address the specific recommendations raised within the report may introduce additional financial implications, either through reprioritisation of other projects, or through new workstreams.

Consideration will be given to ensure associated costs, both direct and indirect, are fully understood and managed effectively.

Risk management:

There remain reputational corporate risks to the organisation. The Service continues to take steps to mitigate this through having extensive internal and external audits of a number of areas of the Service, in addition to the HMICFRS inspections. The internal audit plan for 24/25 can be found here: [Internal Audit plan](#)

Legal implications:

The current Fire and Rescue Service National Framework issued under section 21 of the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004, to which the Authority must have regard when carrying out its functions, states as follows at paragraph 7.5:

‘Fire and rescue authorities must give due regard to reports and recommendations made by HMICFRS and – if recommendations are made – prepare, update and regularly publish an action plan detailing how the recommendations are being actioned. If the fire and rescue authority does not propose to undertake any action as a result of a recommendation, reasons for this should be given.’

It continues: ‘When forming an action plan, the fire and rescue authority could seek advice and support from other organisations, for example, the National Fire Chiefs Council and the Local Government Association’.

Privacy and security implications:

No privacy or security implications have been identified that are directly associated with this report or its appendices.

The report and its appendices are not protectively marked.

Duty to collaborate:

Each fire and rescue service is inspected individually. However, the latest 2023-2025 inspection report includes findings relating to the Service’s ability to collaborate effectively with partners. The report states: “We were pleased to see the service meets its statutory duty to collaborate. It continues to consider opportunities to collaborate with other emergency responders.”

Health and safety implications:

The Service’s 2023-2025 HMICFRS report states:

- The service provides good well-being provisions to its workforce, but work-related stress is not being fully addressed.
- The service has a positive health and safety culture.

Environmental implications:

No environmental implications have been identified that are directly associated with this report or its appendices.

Equality, diversity, and inclusion implications:

In the Service's 2023-2025 HMICFRS report, the Service has been judged as 'requires improvement' in the area relating to ensuring fairness and promoting diversity, along with a cause of concern and four recommendations relating to equality, diversity and inclusion. All the findings from the HMICFRS round three inspection report have been fully considered and prioritised to ensure continual improvement is established and maintained.

Consultation and communication:

Specific areas identified for Service improvement are being captured in relevant plans and will be reported on in line with the recommendations.

Background papers:

HMICFRS BFRS Home Page: [Buckinghamshire - His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services \(justiceinspectorates.gov.uk\)](https://justiceinspectorates.gov.uk)

16 February 2022 – Fire Authority: Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) – Buckinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service (BFRS) Inspection Report 2021

<https://bucksfire.gov.uk/documents/2022/02/fa-item-10-16022022.pdf/>

28 April 2023 - Extraordinary Fire Authority Meeting: Values and Culture in fire and rescue services

bucksfire.gov.uk/documents/2023/04/bmkfa-extraordinary-meeting-28-april-2023-item-8-values-and-culture-in-fire-and-rescue-services.pdf/

24 October 2023 – Extraordinary Fire Authority: His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) – Buckinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service (BFRS) Inspection Report 2023

bucksfire.gov.uk/documents/2023/10/extraordinary-fire-authority-meeting-24-october-2023-item-9-hmicfrs-inspection-report.pdf/

6 December 2023 – Fire Authority: His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) – Buckinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service (BFRS) 2023 Action Plan

<https://bucksfire.gov.uk/documents/2023/11/fire-authority-meeting-6-december-2023-item-15-hmicfrs-action-plan.pdf/>

8 February 2024 – Executive Committee: His Majesty’s Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) – Buckinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service (BFRS) 2023 Update

bucksfire.gov.uk/documents/2024/01/executive-committee-meeting-8-february-2024-item-12-his-majestys-inspectorate-of-constabulary-and-fire-and-rescue-services-hmicfrs-buckinghamshire-fire-and-rescue-service-bfrs-2023-update.pdf/

13 March 2024 – Overview and Audit Committee: His Majesty’s Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) – Buckinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service (BFRS) 2023 Update

<https://bucksfire.gov.uk/documents/2024/02/overview-and-audit-committee-13-march-2024-item-9-hmicfrs-bfrs-2023-2025-update.pdf/>

09 May 2024 - State of Fire and Rescue: The Annual Assessment of Fire and Rescue Services in England 2023

[State of Fire and Rescue: The Annual Assessment of Fire and Rescue Services in England 2023 - His Majesty’s Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services \(justiceinspectorates.gov.uk\)](https://justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/state-of-fire-and-rescue-the-annual-assessment-of-fire-and-rescue-services-in-england-2023-his-majestys-inspectorate-of-constabulary-and-fire-rescue-services/)

12 June 2024 - Fire Authority: His Majesty’s Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) – Buckinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service (BFRS) 2023-2025 Update

[Public Pack\)Agenda Document for Buckinghamshire & Milton Keynes Fire Authority, 12/06/2024 11:00 \(bucksfire.gov.uk\)](https://bucksfire.gov.uk/agenda-document-for-buckinghamshire-milton-keynes-fire-authority-12-06-2024-11-00)

30 July 2024 – HMICFRS Buckinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service: Causes of concern revisit letter

[Buckinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service: Causes of concern revisit letter - His Majesty’s Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services \(justiceinspectorates.gov.uk\)](https://justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/buckinghamshire-fire-and-rescue-service-causes-of-concern-revisit-letter-his-majestys-inspectorate-of-constabulary-and-fire-rescue-services/)

01 August 2024 - HMICFRS Standards of behaviour: The handling of misconduct in fire and rescue services

[Standards of behaviour: The handling of misconduct in fire and rescue services - His Majesty’s Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services \(justiceinspectorates.gov.uk\)](https://justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/standards-of-behaviour-the-handling-of-misconduct-in-fire-and-rescue-services-his-majestys-inspectorate-of-constabulary-and-fire-rescue-services/)

Appendix	Title	Protective Marking
1	HMICFRS Standards of behaviour Action Plan	N/A