

## Report of Assistant Director: Prevention

### Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabularies and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) Report and Improvement Plan

#### Purpose of Report

1. To update Members on the outcome of the 2021 HMICFRS inspection report and the preparation of an improvement plan.
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#### Recommendation

***It is recommended that Members note the findings of the HMICFRS inspection report and the proposed improvement plan.***

#### Introduction and Background

2. Members will be aware that Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Service (HWFRS) was inspected by officers from Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) during April and May 2021.
3. HMICFRS announced their intention to begin to re-inspect all 44 fire and rescue services in England in three tranches. HWFRS was inspected as part of the first tranche of twelve services with final reports published on 15 December 2021.
4. The inspection focused on three main questions:
  - a. How **effective** is the fire and rescue service at keeping people safe and secure from fire and other risks?
  - b. How **efficient** is the fire and rescue service at keeping people safe and secure from fire and other risks?
  - c. How well does the fire and rescue service look after its **people**?
5. The inspection involved reviewing the Service's policies, plans and procedures, the submission of a Position Statement and Self-Assessment completed by the Chief Fire Officer, and a six-week remote fieldwork phase. The fieldwork was all completed remotely via video conferencing, during which inspectors interviewed employees from six wholetime fire stations and six on-call stations, held several focus groups with members of staff across the whole organisation and conducted interviews with senior managers.
6. As you are aware the Authority received prior notice that the Inspectorate had issued a Cause of Concern in relation to prevention activity. Members have been updated on progress against the Cause of Concern Action Plan separately.

7. HMICFRS have concluded their inspections of all twelve services in the first tranche and their overall State of Fire 2021 report has now been published along with individual reports for each service. The reports were published on 15 December 2021 and are available on the [HMICFRS website](#). The report for HWFRS is attached as Appendix 1.

### Summary of Feedback

8. Using graded judgements against areas explored in the inspections, HMICFRS identified four overall judgement categories:
- **outstanding** – where the service exceeds what is expected for good,
  - **good** – the expected graded judgement for all fire and rescue services,
  - **requires improvement** – where there are shortcomings, and
  - **inadequate** – where there are serious critical failings of policy, practice or performance.
9. The following table lists the distribution of gradings awarded to the twelve services inspected in tranche one 2021 with the 2018/19 scores in brackets for comparison.

	Effectiveness	Efficiency	People
<b>Outstanding</b>	0 (0)	1 (0)	0 (0)
<b>Good</b>	4 (6)	2 (4)	5 (4)
<b>Requires Improvement</b>	8 (6)	9 (7)	7 (7)
<b>Inadequate</b>	0 (0)	0 (1)	0 (1)

10. The overall summary of inspection findings for Hereford & Worcester FRS states:

*“I am satisfied with some aspects of the performance of Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Service. And I am encouraged by the improvements the service has made in certain areas since our last inspection. However, there remain areas where it needs to improve.”*

11. The individual gradings against the three areas examined were as follows:

**a. Effectiveness: Requires improvement**

*“The service is good at protecting the public through fire regulation. It is also good at responding to major and multi-agency incidents. That said, the service requires improvement in its understanding and prevention of fires and other risks. It also requires improvement in how it responds to fires and other emergencies.”*

**b. Efficiency: Requires improvement**

*“The service displays some sound financial management. But it requires improvement at making best use of resources. It needs to show a clear rationale for allocating resources between its activities, and this should be in line with the risk and priorities as described in the CRMP. The service needs a testing programme for its business continuity plans. And it needs to better monitor, review and evaluate the benefits and outcomes of future collaborations.”*

**c. People: Requires improvement**

*“Staff have a good understanding of the service’s values, which are well defined. The service should make sure that senior managers are visible and model service values.”*

**Improvement Plan**

12. The inspection report highlighted one Cause of Concern and twenty-two Areas for Improvement (AFI) and recommended that action be taken to address them.
13. Therefore, the Service is now in the process of reviewing the feedback received and collating improvement action plans to address the findings. The Service will prepare an improvement plan for Members to consider at the next full Fire Authority meeting in May 2022.
14. The Improvement Plan will be owned by senior managers and will be regularly updated and published as progress is made. Proposals will be assessed to ensure they meet the Service’s overall Core Purpose and align to the core strategies
15. The Cause of Concern is being reported on separately via the Audit and Standards Committee.

**Conclusion/Summary**

16. The HMICFRS inspection report for Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Service has been published.
17. The report highlighted a number of areas for improvement, which form the basis of an Improvement Plan to be considered by Members at the next Fire Authority Meeting in May 2022.

## Corporate Considerations

<b>Resource Implications</b> (identify any financial, legal, property or human resources issues)	The report highlights areas for improvement in relation to effectiveness, efficiency and the Service workforce. Actions to address these areas are likely to have resource implications, and these will be considered through the action planning phase.
<b>Strategic Policy Links</b> (identify how proposals link in with current priorities and policy framework and if they do not, identify any potential implications).	Proposals developed through the Improvement Plan are likely to have an impact on both the CRMP and the MTFP.  Proposals will also be assessed to ensure they meet the Service's overall Core Purpose and align to the core strategies.
<b>Risk Management / Health &amp; Safety</b> (identify any risks, the proposed control measures and risk evaluation scores).	Any risks associated with proposals will be assessed through the Improvement Plan.
<b>Consultation</b> (identify any public or other consultation that has been carried out on this matter)	None directly. Proposals developed through the Improvement Plan will consider any consultation requirements as necessary.
<b>Equalities</b> (has an Equalities Impact Assessment been completed? If not, why not?)	An EIA is not required as part of this report. EIAs will be completed as appropriate when preparing proposals through the Improvement Plan.
<b>Data Protection Impact Assessment</b> (where personal data is processed a DPIA must be completed to ensure compliant handling)	A DPIA is not required as part of this report. DPIA's will be completed as appropriate when preparing proposals through the Improvement Plan.

## Supporting Information

Appendix 1 – **Fire & Rescue Service 2021/22:** Effectiveness, efficiency and people:  
An inspection of Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Service