

HMICFRS Values and Culture Update

Report of the Chief Fire Officer

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1 Executive Summary

This report presents the Service progress against the recommendations made to the sector in the His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) Values and Culture in the fire and rescue services report

2 Recommendations

Members are asked to:

- a) Note the report

3 Background

On the 30th of March 2023, the HMICFRS published a report entitled "Values and culture in fire and rescue services" (See Appendix).

Chief Fire Officers were requested to action 20 of the 35 recommendations, with the remaining recommendations responsible for action by other agencies and services.

The recommendations timelines varied from immediate to March 2024 for Chief Fire Officers and up to January 2025 for the other responsible organisations.

On receipt of the report the Service immediately carried out a gap analysis which formed the basis of the Service Action Plan.

4 Service Approach and Actions

The Service is committed to implementing the recommendations prioritising those that are currently within its gift and continues to work proactively to meet the HMICFRS recommendations.

This work is being driven by ACFO Corporate Services and teams of staff who have taken responsibility for the recommendations as detailed in the action plan.

To support progress against the action plan the National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) and Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD) suite of supporting documents has been considered as a form of reference, alongside any relevant HMICFRS identified promising and innovative practice.

Full Equality Impact Assessments (EQIAs) are expected to be completed to support the completed actions from each of the appropriate recommendations.

Representative bodies will be engaged during informal meetings and consultations to ensure they are fully sighted on developments and can put forward any comments

Communications to all staff will continue to engage and inform staff of any new provisions, policies, and opportunities for consultation.

5 Progress

Please note, at the time of writing this report the June timeline has not expired but work to meet the recommendations for completion by this date is in its advanced stages. The Fire Authority will be updated with a more accurate commentary on further progressions and any developments during this meeting.

- Of the 20 recommendations that Chief Fire Officers are requested to action two are to be completed immediately. Recommendation 17 has been completed and recommendation 34 is in its advanced stages of progression and is expected to be completed within the timeline.
- Nine of the recommendations to be actioned are to be completed by the 1st of June 2023. These are recommendations 3,4,5,20,21,23,27,28 and 32. These recommendations have been progressed substantially and are expected to be completed within the timeline.
- Two of the recommendations to be actioned are to be completed by the 1st of August 2023. These are recommendations 18 and 33. These recommendations have been progressed substantially and are expected to be completed within the timeline.
- One of the recommendations to be actioned is to be completed by the 1st of September 2023. Recommendation 22 is in its advanced stages of progression and is expected to be completed within the timeline.
- Three of the recommendations to be actioned are to be completed by the 1st of October 2023. These are recommendations 1, 24, and 26. These recommendations have been progressed substantially and are expected to be completed within the timeline.
- One of the recommendations that Chief Fire Officers are requested to action is to be completed by the 1st of January 2024. Recommendation 9 has been progressed substantially and is expected to be completed within the timeline.
- Two of the recommendations to be actioned are to be completed by the 1st of March 2024. These are recommendations 12 and 14. At the time of publishing the Fire Standards to support this recommendation have not yet been released, once these documents have been published work can be progressed.
- Note: a full description of the recommendations can be found in the HMICFRS Values and Culture in the fire and rescue services report Appendix 1

6 Conclusions

In summary, the Service is making substantial progress towards meeting the recommendations of the report and the timelines are expected to be met.

The Service also recognises the challenges posed by the variety of timelines associated with the recommendations and the availability of key unpublished guidance and tools to facilitate the review.

With the progress made towards the action plan and the advanced plans that were previously in place the Service is in a strong position to further develop its values and culture.

7 Capacity

The Human Resources team are exploring opportunities to increase capacity to support the project following an unsuccessful recruitment campaign.

Transformation and Collaboration are coordinating and leading the Service response this will impact on existing workloads.

8 Fire Alliance / Collaboration / Partnership Working

All aspects and opportunities will be shared across the Alliance as the Service proceeds through implementing the recommendations.

9 Financial Implications

The cost of the SaySo confidential reporting tool is £6,300 per year

Additional costings will be identified as contracts are negotiated to action recommendations that the Service will need to procure (e.g., the independent cultural review, external oversight of gross misconduct cases involving values and culture, DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) checks).

10 Legal Comment

Legal advice will be sought including elements of GDPR and disclosure that might be impacted by HMICFRS data and information requests.

Executive Support have emailed a copy of this CFA report to the Service solicitor, to check the report and provide legal comment.

11 Community Safety

A lack of trust and confidence in the Service could reduce the willingness of the community to engage with the Service thus increasing community risk.

12 Environmental

There are no environmental impacts arising from this report.

13 Equality Impact Assessment

Full EQIAs to be completed to support the completed actions from each of the recommendations.

14 Health and Safety

There are no health and safety impacts arising from this report.

15 Fire Standard Core Code of Ethics and Human Rights (including Data Protection)

This work involves both current and future fire standards.

16 ICT

There are no ICT impacts arising from this report.

17 Insurance

Failure to meet HMICFRS recommendations could increase corporate risk to the Service from civil action.

18 The On-call Service

There will be a communication requirement to mitigate the impact on all staff when independent investigations are carried out in the future. All aspects of change will need to be supported by appropriate change management.

19 Public Value / Service Delivery

Implementing these recommendations in full will support Service Delivery and provide public value.

20 Reputation

Failure to implement these recommendations will have an adverse effect on the Service reputation. The Service will drive the change by continuing to lead in a visible, accessible, honest, and transparent way.

21 Security

There are data security issues with how sensitive data is stored and shared with partners.

22 Training

All recommendations will have an element of training, this is being assessed as part of the delivery phase.

23 Appendix

HMICFRS report Values and culture in fire and rescue services

<https://www.justiceinspectors.gov.uk/hmicfrs/wp-content/uploads/values-and-culture-in-fire-and-rescue-services.pdf>

24 Background Papers

There are no background papers associated with this report.