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Additional / To Follow Agenda Items

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Nottinghamshire and City of Nottingham Fire and Rescue Authority - Policy and Strategy

Date: Friday, 27 January 2023

Time: 10.00 am

Place: Joint Fire / Police HQ, Sherwood Lodge, Arnold, Nottingham, NG5 8PP

Governance Officer: Cath Ziane-Pryor **Direct Dial:** 0115 8764298

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NOTTINGHAMSHIRE
Fire & Rescue Service
Creating Safer Communities

Nottinghamshire and City of Nottingham
Fire and Rescue Authority
Policy and Strategy Committee

HIS MAJESTY’S INSPECTORATE OF CONSTABULARY AND FIRE & RESCUE SERVICES, AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

Report of the Chief Fire Officer

Date: 27 January 2023

Purpose of Report:

To present Members with an update on the Service’s response to the 2021 inspection of Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service by His Majesty’s Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services.

Recommendations:

It is recommended that Members:

- Note the ‘Areas for Improvement’ delegated to the Committee for scrutiny and monitoring;
- Agree the approach of the Chief Fire Officer for addressing the ‘Areas for Improvement’;
- Note the actions undertaken to date

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1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 At the meeting of the Fire Authority in September 2022, Members were presented the report from His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) following the recent inspection of Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service (NFRS).
- 1.2 Accompanying the report, Members were presented with a paper detailing the four 'Areas for Improvement' (AFIs) that had been highlighted by HMICFRS.
- 1.3 It was agreed that scrutiny and monitoring of progress of these actions would be facilitated through the Fire Authority Committee structure, with progress reports being presented to Members.
- 1.4 Of the four AFIs, one was aligned to the Policy and Strategy Committee for scrutiny.

2. REPORT

- 2.1 Each of the areas for improvement have been allocated to a lead officer with clear milestones and expected outcomes. Within the Service, progress against these timelines is monitored and reported through the monthly Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP) Assurance Board, chaired by the Chief Fire Officer.
- 2.2 Since the HMICFRS report was published in July 2022, the Service has undertaken a gap analysis against areas of work that were already being progressed under the current CRMP. This has assured that work to address the AFIs was either already planned or has now been included in the Service's annual delivery planning.
- 2.3 The AFI delegated to this Committee is:
 - AFI 1 - The Service should make sure it effectively monitors, reviews and evaluates the benefits and outcomes of any collaboration activity.

AREA FOR IMPROVEMENT 1

- 2.4 In the report, the Inspectorate noted that *'We are satisfied that the Service monitors, reviews and evaluates the benefits and results of its collaborations. But its reviews and evaluation are limited in scope and aren't used to learn or change decisions. We have seen evidence of evaluation of the control room merger with DFRS. However, this is largely focused on financial results and hasn't considered other benefits or risks that have occurred as a result of the merger.'*

2.5 To develop the Service’s approach to evaluation in this area, the Service has undertaken a gap analysis to identify areas for improvement. This has resulted in a workstream being undertaken that will:

- Review the Service’s evaluation framework to make sure that it is refreshed, fit for purpose and embedded in Service activity;
- Engage with the wider sector to identify best practice and understand areas for improvement within NFRS;
- Continue to work with Nottingham Trent University on the review of evaluation in the Service;
- Ensure that evaluation criteria are embedded in Service projects from the outset and are incorporated into the Year Two Annual Delivery Plan, and all future collaborations;
- Ensure that evaluations are considered through internal governance meetings so that further review, development and learning can occur.

2.6 Collaborative work with Nottingham Trent University has seen the placement of a PhD student with the Service specifically reviewing evaluation. One of the areas of focus from this placement will be an evaluation of the Joint Headquarters project that will address the wider evaluation areas highlighted by HMICFRS.

2.7 An initial meeting has been held with Kent Fire and Rescue Service, highlighted as having an effective and embedded evaluation framework in place. Further meetings are due to be held to learn from their best practices and incorporate these into the Service’s review of this area.

2.8 Work has begun on this AFI in October 2022 and is due to complete in early 2024. Progress against this timescale will be monitored by the Service’s CRMP Assurance Board and regular updates will be presented to Members through this Committee.

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no financial implications arising from this report.

4. HUMAN RESOURCES AND LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT IMPLICATIONS

There are no human resources or learning and development implications arising from this report.

5. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

An equality impact assessment has not been undertaken because the information contained in this report does not relate to a change in policy or procedure.

6. CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS

There are no crime and disorder implications arising from this report.

7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 The Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004 places a duty on NFRS in respect of the delivery of its services to communities.
- 7.2 The Local Government Act 1999 places a statutory duty on NFRS to '*secure continuous improvement in the way in which its functions are exercised*'. The reporting of Service Delivery's performance ensures that the Service is focusing on key objectives as set by the Fire Authority and continuous improvement. This ensures that Members can apply effective scrutiny to be satisfied that statutory obligations are being met.
- 7.3 The Police and Crime Act (2017) Chapter 4 Section 11, outlines that the English inspectors must inspect, and report on the efficiency and effectiveness of, fire and rescue authorities in England.

8. RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

There are no risk management implications arising from this report.

9. COLLABORATION IMPLICATIONS

There are no collaboration implications arising from this report.

10. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that Members:

- 10.1 Note the 'Areas for Improvement' delegated to the Committee for scrutiny and monitoring.
- 10.2 Agree the approach of the Chief Fire Officer for addressing the 'Areas for Improvement'.
- 10.3 Note the actions undertaken to date.

11. BACKGROUND PAPERS FOR INSPECTION (OTHER THAN PUBLISHED DOCUMENTS)

None.

Craig Parkin
CHIEF FIRE OFFICER

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