



NOTTINGHAMSHIRE
Fire & Rescue Service
Creating Safer Communities

Nottinghamshire and City of Nottingham
Fire and Rescue Authority
Community Safety Committee

AN UPDATE ON THE 'AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT' FROM THE 2019 HMICFRS INSPECTION

Report of the Chief Fire Officer

Date: 08 October 2021

Purpose of Report:

To present Members with an update on the Service's response to the 2019 inspection of Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services.

Recommendations:

It is recommended that Members:

- Agree the extension of 'Area for Improvement 9' to 31 March 2022.
- Agree to receive update reports on progress against the outstanding 'Area for Improvement'.

CONTACT OFFICER

Name: Craig Parkin
Deputy Chief Fire Officer

Tel: 0115 967 0880

Email: craig.parkin@notts-fire.gov.uk

Media Enquiries Contact: Simon Cotton, Senior Communications Manager
0115 967 0880 simon.cotton@notts-fire.gov.uk

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 At the meeting of the Fire Authority in July 2019, Members were presented the report from Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) following the recent inspection of Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service (NFRS).
- 1.2 In September 2019, Members were presented with an action plan detailing the 24 'Areas for Improvement' (AFIs) which had been highlighted by HMICFRS and capturing the actions to address these areas.
- 1.3 It was agreed that scrutiny and monitoring of progress of these actions would be facilitated through the Fire Authority Committee structure, with regular progress reports being presented to Members.
- 1.4 Of the 24 AFIs, 12 were aligned to the Community Safety Committee for scrutiny.

2. REPORT

- 2.1 Each of the 24 areas for improvement were allocated to a lead officer with clear milestones and expected outcomes. Within the Service, progress against these timelines was monitored and reported through the monthly Performance and Programme Board, chaired by the Chief Fire Officer.
- 2.2 Over the past 18 months, work has been undertaken to develop the Service in the areas highlighted by HMICFRS. Much of the work which was developed had already been started by the Service or was planned as part of the 2019/20 Business Plans. The Service has continued to focus resources and support to ensure continual improvement of these areas as part of the Service's wider Strategic Plan.
- 2.3 Eleven AFIs have previously been presented to Members and 'closed' at the Community Safety Committee and, in total, 23 of the 24 AFIs have now been closed by the Service and approved by Members.
- 2.4 The final area for improvement, under Community Safety Committee governance, is AFI 9 – *"to ensure that mobile data terminals (MDTs) are reliable to allow staff to access risk information"*.
- 2.5 Progress against AFI 9 did not meet the original target date of 31 March 2021 and was extended by Members to 31 September 2021 at the June Community Safety Committee. The failure to meet original deadlines occurred due to the Service's supplier being unable to deliver proposed upgrades to the Service's mobilising systems which would have remedied the issues which had been highlighted.
- 2.6 The outstanding AFI is being addressed by the Strategic Leadership Team and has been entered on the Service's Corporate Risk Register due to impacts on the provision of risk information to operational crews.

- 2.7 Work has been prioritised to improve functionality and reliability of the Service's mobile data terminals and is being tightly monitored to ensure progress through a programme board being chaired by the Assistant Chief Fire Officer.
- 2.8 To achieve a satisfactory position to close this AFI, the Programme Board is overseeing 16 actions which will address immediate, medium, and long-term requirements to provide a sustainable solution. These actions are split in to three phases.
- 2.9 The initial phase addresses the immediate risks posed by lack of reliability of the Service's mobile data terminals and the accessing of up-to-date risk information by crews. These initial actions have now been completed, including implementing a new approach to remedying issues that arise with the data terminals.
- 2.10 The medium and longer-term actions are being addressed and currently report progress which is on target against the programme plan.
- 2.11 The Service has allocated additional funding, which was reported to the Finances and Resources Committee in July 2021, as well as prioritising actions to mitigate the immediate risks.
- 2.12 It is forecasted this work will be completed in March 2022 and therefore it is proposed the deadline for this AFI is extended to 31 March 2022, to allow suitable assurance to occur and be reported.
- 2.13 It is proposed that Members agree the extension of AFI 9 for completion by 31 March 2022 with a closure report to be presented to the July 2022 Community Safety Committee.
- 2.14 It is proposed that interim update reports continue to be presented to the Community Safety Committee, to report progress against the programme.

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 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 Agree the extension of 'Area for Improvement 9' to 31 March 2022.
- 10.2 Agree to receive update reports on progress against the outstanding 'Area for Improvement'.

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

None.

John Buckley
CHIEF FIRE OFFICER