



NOTTINGHAMSHIRE
Fire & Rescue Service
Creating Safer Communities

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

HER MAJESTY'S INSPECTORATE OF CONSTABULARY AND FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICES, AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

Report of the Chief Fire Officer

Date: 06 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 Her 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 Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) following the 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) which had been highlighted by HMICFRS.
- 1.3 It was agreed that scrutiny and monitoring of progress on these actions would be facilitated through the Fire Authority Committee structure, with progress reports being presented to Members.
- 1.4 Of the four AFIs, two were aligned to the Community Safety Committee for scrutiny.

2. REPORT

- 2.1 Each of the AFIs 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 Assurance Board (CRMP AB), 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 Community Risk Management Plan (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 two AFIs identified delegated to this Committee are:
 - AFI 2 – the Service should assure itself that its risk-based inspection programme prioritises the highest risks and includes proportionate activity to reduce risk;
 - AFI 4 – the Service should ensure that, when responding to a 999 call, mobile data terminals are reliable to allow staff to access risk information.

AREA FOR IMPROVEMENT 2

- 2.4 Historically, NFRS used a process and methodology that identified and directed its Fire Protection resources to the highest risk premises; this is known as the Risk Based Inspection Programme (RBIP). This methodology was predicated around sleeping accommodation premises, particularly those where people were sleeping in environments that were unfamiliar or where cognitive impairment would impact on their ability to evacuate in the event of fire (eg: hospitals, care homes, hostels and hotels).

- 2.5 During 2020/21, Fire Protection was granted additional uplift grant funding from the Home Office to assist and support the impact of changes in legislation and implementation of work to address the recommendations from Phase 1 of the Grenfell Inquiry. A proportion of this funding was utilised to employ the services of an external contractor with the appropriate skills which would enable the Service to build a new data driven, evidence based RBIP.
- 2.6 To support the evaluation of this work, the Service has supported a PHD student placement from Nottingham Trent University with a focus on evaluation. Part of this work is focussed on how data is used from partner organisations to inform the RBIP, with particular emphasis being placed on research in two areas that will support Fire Protection:
- How and why the decision was taken to use data from partner agencies to inform the RBIP – to include the review of the data, weightings and methodology which helps direct NFRS resources to risk;
 - How NFRS is evaluating this change in policy since it was introduced
- 2.7 Initial findings of this evaluation are due to be reported in May 2023 and further updates will be provided to Members at this point.

AREA FOR IMPROVEMENT 4

- 2.8 The provision of accurate risk information and reliability of Mobile Data Terminals (MDTs) was an AFI highlighted by HMICFRS in the 2019 inspection.
- 2.9 This AFI was closed in June 2022 following work undertaken by the Service, and overseen by the Assistant Chief Fire Officer, to ensure that risk information was available for operational crews at incidents.
- 2.10 This new AFI seeks to ensure that the work undertaken to date continues to be assured and further improvements made to the reliability of access to risk information.
- 2.11 The Service has continued scrutiny meetings for the assurance of work around MDTs and risk information. These meetings bring together departments across the Service to ensure that current monitoring, development and assurance continues in relation to this area.
- 2.12 The latest scrutiny meeting has highlighted that reliability of MDTs remains sub-optimal, however mitigations put in place by the Service are ensuring that risk information continues to be available through secondary devices, and issues arising with MDTs are being addressed in a timely manner through in-house engineer attendance.
- 2.13 In the annual delivery plan for 2023/24, the Service aims to replace the current provision of MDTs and secondary devices on all frontline appliances.

- 2.14 This project will also look at how information is hosted on these platforms to ensure that they are resilient, secure and accessible by crews.
- 2.15 Members will be aware that the Service is currently undertaking a Regional Mobilisation System replacement project as part of the Tri-Service Control agreement. This project will aim to provide further improvement to the provision of information to crews responding to incidents.
- 2.16 The MDT replacement project is due to start in early 2023 and will progress throughout the year, with an aim of completing by October 2023. Members will be updated as this project progresses.

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