



NOTTINGHAMSHIRE
Fire & Rescue Service
Creating Safer Communities

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

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

Report of the Chief Fire Officer

Date: 13 October 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:

That Members note the progress with addressing the areas for improvement assigned to the Community Safety Committee.

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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, 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. Progress against these timelines continues to be monitored and reported through the monthly Community Risk Management Plan Assurance Board (CRMP AB), chaired by the Chief Fire Officer.
- 2.2 The two AFIs 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 (MDTs) are reliable to allow staff to access risk information

AREA FOR IMPROVEMENT 2

- 2.3 The Risk Based Inspection Programme (RBIP) is the method by which the Service ensures that its fire protection activities are targeted at the highest risk premises.
- 2.4 Work with Nottingham Trent University to undertake an independent evaluation of the RBIP has been delayed, but continues to be progressed in order to evaluate the methodology that the Service currently uses to identify premises which are deemed to be the highest risk.
- 2.5 The National Fire Chiefs' Council (NFCC) has recently published a consultation on '*Guidance on risk, highest risk occupancies and prioritising fire safety interventions*' which defines the criteria for identifying the highest risk

premises for inspection. The Service is now undertaking a gap-analysis and evaluation against these proposed criteria to assess the current effectiveness of the Service's RBIP methodology.

2.6 Whilst there are ongoing delays to the external evaluation work, the reporting timetable for this action is still on-track and a further update will be brought to the meeting in January 2024 to provide an update on the outcomes of the internal evaluation detailed above.

2.7 This AFI is anticipated to be reported for closure in Spring 2024.

AREA FOR IMPROVEMENT 4

2.8 The provision of accurate risk information and reliability of 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 It was previously reported that the Service was seeking to replace the current MDTs in the financial year 2023/24 and to enhance the resilience and availability of risk information for crews through the provision of a secondary device.

2.12 The Service has now rolled out new MDTs to all fire appliances. The MDT replacement programme was carried out in conjunction with Leicestershire and Derbyshire Fire and Rescue Services as part of the Tri-Service collaboration.

2.13 Whilst the roll-out of the new hardware has provided some improvements to functionality and reliability, some issues remain in relation to the information and system capability provided by the current mobilising system. Work continues through the Service's ICT team to improve and maintain the reliability and accessibility of these devices.

2.14 Members will be aware that there is an ongoing replacement mobilising system programme with Derbyshire Fire and Rescue Service that will replace the current system.

2.15 The Service has now commenced procurement of a replacement secondary mobile device which will be rolled out to all frontline appliances to ensure a sustainable and reliable approach to accessing risk information. This secondary device will ensure a resilient approach to accessing risk information for crews across the two devices.

- 2.16 This work continues to be closely monitored and managed through a project approach which is overseen by the Assistant Chief Fire Officer, and future updates will continue to be provided on this workstream.

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

- 8.1 The Service's Corporate Risk Register identifies a number of risks which are mitigated, in part, by addressing the AFIs detailed in this report. These are:

Corporate Risk Register item	Mitigation
3 – Mobilising	The introduction of new MDTs supports the mitigation of this risk through ensuring that mobilising information is passed in a timely and reliable manner. The new MDTs effectively interface with the existing mobilising system.
7 – Health, Safety and Welfare	The provision of new secondary devices will ensure that firefighters have multiple, resilient methods to access risk information at incidents.
15 – Corporate Reputation	The effective management of, and improvement against, the AFIs mitigate the risk of a negative inspection outcome from the Inspectorate which would affect the corporate reputation of the Service.

9. COLLABORATION IMPLICATIONS

The Service continues to work in collaboration with Leicestershire and Derbyshire Fire and Rescue Services as part of tri-service collaboration arrangements.

10. RECOMMENDATIONS

That Members note the progress with addressing the areas for improvement assigned to the Community Safety Committee.

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

None.

Craig Parkin
CHIEF FIRE OFFICER