

**Open Report on behalf of Nick Borrill, Chief Fire Officer**

Report to:	<b>Public Protection and Communities Scrutiny Committee</b>
Date:	<b>12 June 2018</b>
Subject:	<b>Fire and Rescue – Peer Challenge Action Plan</b>

**Summary:**

Lincolnshire Fire and Rescue (LFR) undertook a Local Government Association and National Fire Chiefs Council Fire Peer Challenge over the period 26 - 29 September 2017. The attached report highlights the key outcomes and findings from that Peer Challenge process. Feedback from the Peer Challenge was generally positive. An action plan was developed to address those 'areas for consideration' identified in the report. The purpose of this report is to update members on the progress made against the action plan to date.

**Actions Required:**

The Public Protection and Communities Scrutiny Committee are invited to consider and comment on progress made against the action plan and recommend any changes or actions required.

## **1. Background**

Fire Peer Challenge, jointly sponsored by the Local Government Association (LGA) and the National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC), is part of the approach to sector led improvement. The purpose of the review was to provide external challenge to help support improvement and to reflect how the Service is performing across a number of key areas. The Peer Challenge process is structured around 7 Key Assessment Areas and 6 Strategic Leadership questions as outlined in the Operational Assessment and Peer Challenge toolkit. In addition to these areas, the Service also requested the Peer team to focus on the following:

- Sense check on Integrated Risk Management Planning (IRMP) changes
- Collaboration
- Workforce Reform

The Peer Challenge took place in LFR from 26-29 September 2017 and consisted of a range of on-site activities including interviews, focus groups and fire station visits. This complemented a review of supporting documentation provided to the Peer Team in advance of their visit.

The Peer team comprised the Chief Fire Officer from Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service (FRS), the Chairman of Kent and Medway Fire and Rescue Authority, fire officers from Oxfordshire, Gloucestershire and Nottinghamshire FRS and a programme manager from the LGA. Key findings from the Peer Challenge included that:

- There is pride and a positive culture across LFR
- IRMP changes have been well managed with good staff and partner engagement, ensuring that LFR remains fit for purpose
- There is a clear commitment to blue light collaboration which is well resourced and governed

As with any Peer Challenge process there were also a number of 'areas for consideration' identified. An action plan was developed to address these areas and reflecting on the importance of some of the matters raised, tight timelines were assigned.

In drawing up the plan, common themes were merged condensing down to a manageable number of actions whilst being careful to ensure all points were captured. In doing this, to ensure context is not lost, all actions are cross referenced to the report. It may be beneficial to have a copy of the report handy when reviewing the action plan.

## **2. Conclusion**

The Fire Peer Challenge is a voluntary process managed by and delivered for the sector. It is not a form of sector-led inspection moreover a mechanism to provide FRS with information allowing them to challenge operational service delivery and organisational effectiveness, to ensure they are efficient, effective and robust.

The action plan, which can be found at Appendix B, comprises 25 actions and has been updated with progress to June 2018. While good progress has been achieved, those planned completion dates not met have a new agreed target entered beneath. Of the 25 actions, 12 are complete, work has commenced on a further 12 and action against 1 has yet to commence. We continue to work hard to complete all actions.

At the time the action plan was drafted, we were aware of the Home Office intent to introduce a formal inspection process, yet not anticipating being within the first tranche of inspections. We believe that undergoing Fire Peer Challenge has put us in a good place in terms of preparing for inspection. However, the additional burden of inspection preparation has limited available resources for implementing some of the actions in the plan, despite this, we continue to make steady progress.

## **3. Consultation**

### **a) Policy Proofing Actions Required**

n/a

#### 4. Appendices

These are listed below and attached at the back of the report	
Appendix A	Lincolnshire Fire and Rescue Fire Peer Challenge Report November 2017
Appendix B	Lincolnshire Fire and Rescue Fire Peer Challenge Action Plan (Progress Report - June 2018)

#### 5. Background Papers

The following background papers as defined in the Local Government Act 1972 were relied upon in the writing of this report.

Document title	Where the document can be viewed
Operational Assessment and Fire Peer Challenge Toolkit	<a href="https://www.local.gov.uk/sites/default/files/documents/access-new-operational-as-c7f.pdf">https://www.local.gov.uk/sites/default/files/documents/access-new-operational-as-c7f.pdf</a>

This report was written by John Cook, who can be contacted on 01522 555018 or [john.cook@lincoln.fire-uk.org](mailto:john.cook@lincoln.fire-uk.org).

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