

Open Report on behalf of Nick Borrill, Chief Fire Officer

Report to:	Public Protection and Communities Scrutiny Committee
Date:	22 January 2019
Subject:	Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services Report

Summary:

Lincolnshire Fire and Rescue (LFR) was inspected during the summer by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) as part of a new independent inspection process. The reports for the first tranche of 14 Fire and Rescue Services (FRS) were published on 20 December 2018. Overall, LFR received a very positive report being graded 'Good' for how effective it is at keeping people safe from fire and other risks and 'Good' for how efficiently it delivers the Service. An action plan is currently being finalised to address the areas identified for improvement.

Actions Required:

The Public Protection and Communities Scrutiny Committee are invited to consider and comment on the contents of the HMICFRS report and review progress against the finalised action plan on a periodic basis.

1. Background

LFR was inspected during the summer by HMICFRS as part of a new independent inspection process. The reports for the first tranche of 14 FRS were published on 20 December 2018¹.

The inspection format aimed to answer 3 principal questions, namely:

- How *effective* is the Service at keeping people safe and secure from fire and other risks
- How *efficient* is the Service at keeping people safe and secure from fire and other risks
- How well does the Service look after its *people*

¹ The remaining 31 fire and rescue services will be inspected over the next 12 months.

Graded judgements were given for each of the 3 principal questions as well as the sub-questions that sit beneath each principal area. A copy of LFR's inspection report is at Appendix A.

2. Results for Lincolnshire Fire and Rescue

The judgements for LFR are shown below:

Effectiveness	Good
Understanding the risk of fire and other emergencies	Good
Preventing fires and other risks	Good
Protecting the public through fire regulation	Requires improvement
Responding to fires and other emergencies	Good
Responding to national risks	Good

Efficiency	Good
Making best use of resources	Good
Making the fire and rescue service affordable now and in the future	Good

People	Requires improvement
Promoting the right values and culture	Requires Improvement
Getting the right people with the right skills	Requires improvement
Ensuring fairness and promoting diversity	Good
Managing performance and developing leaders	Requires improvement

Overall, LFR received a very positive report being graded 'Good' for how effective it is at keeping people safe from fire and other risks and 'Good' for how efficiently it delivers the Service.

While the Service was assessed as 'requires improvement' in how well it looks after its people, this mainly related to concerns over the effectiveness of its training recording and monitoring systems (*getting the right people with the right skills*). This is an issue the Service was broadly aware of and is already in the process of implementing a new system to help improve the situation.

Other sub-question areas for improvement included *Protecting the Public through Fire Regulation*. This referred primarily to the resources available to carry out fire inspections. Again, this is an area the Service was aware of and has already carried out an internal restructure and submitted a business case for additional resources to mitigate this issue.

The report rightly recognised that LFR displays a positive, friendly culture that is focused on people. However, the Service did receive a 'requires improvement' against this specific sub-question. It is understood HMICFRS came to this conclusion, in part, due to the fact that a number of fire-station-based staff felt disconnected from the service headquarters and County Council and did not maybe fully understand some of the concepts behind the Service's values. Once the Service has a better understanding from HMICFRS with regards to this observation it will look to address this as appropriate.

The Service is now in the process of finalising an action plan to address the areas identified for improvement. This will be presented to the next Public Protection and Communities Scrutiny Committee with progress against the plan being reported on a periodic basis.

HMICFRS Press Release

HMICFRS issued both a national and local press release supporting publication of the reports. An extract of the release for Lincolnshire, issued by HM Inspector of FRS, Zoe Billingham, is shown below:

“People in Lincolnshire will be pleased to know that its local fire and rescue service has hit the mark when it comes to its core duties. The service has a good understanding of local risk and a comprehensive plan in place to make sure that it has the right resources in the right place at the right time. This means that crews are ready to mobilise an effective response when a call comes in.

“Lincolnshire Fire and Rescue Service gets good value for money for its community. It has taken a pragmatic approach to the cost savings it’s had to make, restructuring the service and working more closely with the police and ambulance services. At the same time, it’s made good use of these savings and put them back into the service.

“I am encouraged to see that the workforce takes immense pride in their work, as they should. But I have a few concerns about how Lincolnshire fire and rescue service looks after its people. For example, the process for referring staff who have had difficult and traumatic experiences to the specialist support services they need, can be too convoluted. The service also needs to work on its staff training record keeping. At the moment, it cannot say with certainty that firefighters have all the skills they need to work safely in dangerous conditions.

“Overall, I commend Lincolnshire Fire and Rescue Service and its staff for their hard work. I am confident that when we revisit the service, it will be in even better shape.”

3. Wider FRS Picture

In addition to the individual FRS inspection reports HMICFRS published an overarching ‘Summary of Findings from Tranche 1’ report².

The overall graded judgments for the 14 FRS which have been inspected to date are as follows:

	Outstanding	Good	Requires Improvement	Inadequate
Effectiveness		10 (LFR)	4	
Efficiency		8 (LFR)	5	1
People		3	10 (LFR)	1

² <https://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmicfrs/wp-content/uploads/fire-and-rescue-service-inspections-2018-19.pdf>

Headline themes from a wider FRS perspective include:

- Overall, most fire and rescue services are operationally effective
- There were concerns over the way services regulate fire safety with fire safety audits having reduced by 42% since 2010/11 with many teams under-resourced.
- Just over a half of the services were judged to be good at how they use resources to manage risk and how well they are using their resources to ensure they are affordable
- Too few of the services inspected have achieved a positive culture
- Too few services are good at promoting fairness and diversity

4. Conclusion

Notwithstanding the areas identified for improvement for LFR, this was a strong report overall recognising the broad range of excellent work being carried out across the Service. Work will now continue to finalise and implement the associated action plan with progress being reported through the Public Protection and Communities Scrutiny Committee.

5. Consultation

a) Policy Proofing Actions Required

n/a

6. Appendices

These are listed below and attached at the back of the report	
Appendix A	HMICFRS Report – An Inspection of Lincolnshire Fire and Rescue dated 20 th December 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
Fire and rescue services inspection programme and framework 2018/19	https://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmicfrs/publications/hmicfrs-fire-inspection-programme-2018-19/

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