

Mark Baxter  
Acting Chief Fire Officer  
Lincolnshire Fire and Rescue Service

14 December 2021

Dear Mark,

## **LINCOLNSHIRE FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE ASSESSMENT OF PROGRESS – CAUSE OF CONCERN**

We inspected Lincolnshire Fire and Rescue Service in April and May 2021. During the inspection we identified two areas of concern. We gave you the causes of concern and made recommendations as follows:

The service hasn't taken sufficient action since the last inspection to appropriately resource its protection function.

By 30 September 2021, the service should:

- produce a clear plan for how it will ensure all premises it has identified as high-risk are audited in accordance with the timeframe set out in its risk-based inspection policy;
- review its administration of the protection function to make sure it can record and review all activity in a clear and consistent manner; and
- make sure it has an effective quality assurance process in place so the service can assure itself that staff carry out audits to an appropriate standard.

The service hasn't done enough since the last inspection to improve equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) in the service.

By 30 September 2021, the service should:

- give greater priority to how it increases awareness of EDI across the organisation;
- make sure that all staff receive appropriate EDI training;
- improve how it works with its staff and provides feedback in relation to EDI issues;

- improve the understanding and use of equality impact assessments in all aspects of its work, and consider if its policies and procedures are inclusive and support those with protected characteristics; and
- make sure that there is a programme of positive action initiatives to support its recruitment.

2. You kindly submitted an action plan to HMICFRS on 10 August 2021 setting out how you would address the areas of concern and the recommendations.

3. We received further updates on the action plan on 11 November 2021 to review your progress. We didn't expect to see all the remedial work completed; we were looking for evidence of progress.

### **Governance**

4. The service has shown a strong commitment to carry out the action plan. You have put in place appropriate governance arrangements to monitor progress against the plan. You have provided evidence that you have reviewed and improved your EDI steering group, which is chaired by the chief fire officer who gives strategic oversight. The group meets quarterly to monitor and review progress against the action plan and to provide direction to the task and finish group. You have also created a protection delivery and action plan which is overseen by both the protection and prevention managers who meet monthly to monitor progress.

### **Action plan**

5. The service has detailed action plans covering our causes of concern. The action plans have senior responsible owners, deadlines and specific action owners. The service records completed actions and updates on those that are still to be addressed. You have also identified areas for improvement in recording information and have issued an information note to staff providing guidance for recording protection work.

### **Outcomes to date**

6. We are pleased to see that the service has in place some resources and appropriate governance structures for the commitments in the action plan. Some of the actions had been completed. We note the service's commitment to analysing and monitoring its recruitment process to better understand how to target applicants from under-represented sections of the community to develop a more diverse workforce.

7. However, we would like to see continued progress against the action plan outcomes. The service needs to make sure that it supports the implementation of these outcomes and communicates them effectively.

8. We will continue to monitor progress and will visit the service early in 2022 to make sure the contents of the action plan have been addressed and the service provided to the public of Lincolnshire has improved.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'RW' or similar initials, written in a cursive style.

**Roy Wilshire**

HM Inspector of Constabulary

HM Inspector of Fire and Rescue Services

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