HMICFRS FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE INSPECTION 2018/19 – SUMMARY OF FINDINGS FROM TRANCHE 3 AND CLEVELAND FIRE BRIGADE'S HMICFRS INSPECTION 2018/19

REPORT OF THE CHIEF FIRE OFFICER

For Information

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 To provide Members with a summary of findings from Tranche 3 Inspections.

1.2 To present the outcomes of Cleveland Fire Brigade's HMICFRS Inspection which took place in July 2019; the Report is attached at Appendix 1.

1.3 To inform Members of any identified areas of improvement/development that are captured within the Brigade's Improvement Plan 2019/20 (Appendix 2).

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 Members are asked to note:

- the summary of gradings from Tranche 3 Inspections
- the outcomes of Cleveland Fire Brigade's HMICFRS Inspection 2018/19 as detailed in the Report at Appendix 1
- that any identified areas of improvement/development are captured within the Brigade's Improvement Plan 2019/20 attached at Appendix 2
- that the next inspection discovery week will commence on 21st June 2021 with the inspection week commencing 12th July 2021
- a new Service Liaison Lead has been appointed for the Brigade's 2019/20 Inspection.
- that further reports on the next round of inspections will be provided as and when details of the arrangements are confirmed by HMICFRS

3. BACKGROUND

3.1 As part of its reform agenda, the Government has introduced an independent inspection regime for Fire and Rescue Authorities in England – and the fire and rescue service they oversee. The inspections are delivered by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS). The chief fire and rescue inspector and inspectors of fire and rescue authorities in England have powers of inspection given to them by the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004, as amended by the Policing and Crime Act 2017.

3.2 The inspectorate considers how effective and efficient fire and rescue authorities are, how well they manage their people and whether they are fulfilling their statutory obligations. The inspectorate also highlights good practice and identifies areas where improvement is needed so that remedial or constructive action can be taken.

3.3 The outcomes from the 'first and second tranches' of inspections for 2018/19 were reported to Members in Jan and July 2019 respectively. The final 'third tranche' of inspections were published in December 2019. These were undertaken in 15 fire and rescue services namely: Buckinghamshire, Cleveland, County Durham and Darlington, Cumbria, Derbyshire, Devon and Somerset, East Sussex, Essex, Gloucestershire, London, North Yorkshire, Staffordshire, Suffolk, South Yorkshire and West Yorkshire. A summary of the grades given to those fire and rescue services are set out in the table below with the full results from those inspections being available from the HMICFRS website.

Judgement Area	Number of Fire and Rescue Services			
	Outstanding	Good	Requires Improvement	Inadequate
Effective	0	10 Includes CFB	5	0
Efficiency	0	9 Includes CFB	6	0
People	0	7 Includes CFB	8	0

4. CLEVELAND FIRE BRIGADE'S INSPECTION REPORT 2018/19

4.1 Cleveland Fire Brigade's Inspection Report 2018/19, attached as Appendix 1, was published and distributed to Members in December 2019.

4.2 The HMICFRS found that Cleveland Fire Brigade:
- is **'good'** at effectively keeping people safe and secure from fire and other risks;
- is **'good'** at how efficiently it manages its resources; and
- is **'good'** at looking after its people.

4.3 In his press release HMICFRS Phil Gormley stated that he was pleased to report that Cleveland Fire Brigade had performed well in each of the main areas of inspection and that this was impressive given that the brigade has faced some of the largest cuts to its government funding. He stated that 'the brigade thoroughly assesses the risk to the community and its average response time to primary fires is faster than other fire and rescue services in England. Cleveland has taken an innovative approach to staff working patterns, which has improved flexibility and productivity of the service'. However, Mr Gormley advised that Cleveland, as with many other FRSs, does need to do more to ensure its workforce reflects the diversity of the residential population it serves. He went on to say that the Inspection Report reflected 'excellent performance from the brigade – the people of Cleveland can be confident that they are being well-served'.

4.4 The Inspection Report and its findings clearly show that Cleveland Fire Brigade is one of the top performing FRSs in the country. There is no doubt that this has been achieved as a result of the excellent support that it gets from the CFA; outstanding relationships that it has built with its communities, businesses, partner agencies and other organisations and the professionalism, dedication and hard work of its staff - all of which has made a positive difference to the safety and lives of the people in Teesside.

Improvement Planning

4.5 Our approach to Inspection was one of 'no surprises' and Members will recall that as part of the preparations for CFB's Inspection the Executive Leadership Team undertook a self-assessment of the areas of efficiency, effectiveness and people; we entitled our work 'This is US'. The outcomes of this comprehensive self-assessment informed our Improvement Plan 2019/20.

4.6 Since the publication of the Brigade's Inspection Report 2018/19 we have reviewed the outcomes and any new areas of improvement have been added to the Improvement Plan attached as Appendix 2. The actions within our Plan will be progressed through our Corporate Internal Operating Plan that is regularly reported upon to Members.

5. FUTURE HMICFRS INSPECTIONS

5.1 The Chief Fire Officer has been very recently notified by HMICFRS that our next discovery week will commence on 21 June 2021 with the inspection week commencing 12 July 2021. Preparations are underway for this next round of inspections. It would appear that the inspection regime will follow a similar format and structure to the first inspections with effectiveness, efficiency and people remaining the main themes but, to date, these exact details have not yet been received. The Brigade has been appointed a new Service Liaison Lead for the 2019/20 Inspections.

5.2 In line with current arrangements the Chief Fire Officer will continue to provide the Executive Committee with update reports as and when details of the next round of Inspection are clarified.

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