

Andy Cooke QPM DL
His Majesty's Chief Inspector of Fire
and Rescue Services

Chief Fire Officers, England
Commissioner, London Fire Brigade
Police, fire and crime commissioners
Mayor, Greater Manchester
Deputy Mayor for Fire, London
Chairs, Fire and Rescue Authorities
Chair, National Fire Chiefs Council
Chair, Fire Services Management Committee
General Secretary, Fire Brigades Union
Chair, Fire Standards Board
Chief Executive, Fire & Rescue Services Association
Chief Executive, Fire Officers' Association

12 October 2022

Dear Colleagues,

ANNUAL ASSESSMENT OF FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITIES IN ENGLAND

This letter asks for your advice and assistance in connection with my preparation of the annual assessment of the efficiency and effectiveness of fire and rescue authorities in England. This is the report which I am required by section 28 of the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004 to submit to the Home Secretary and lay before Parliament. I greatly value your views.

The 2022 annual report will provide my first annual assessment as His Majesty's Chief Inspector of Fire and Rescue Services. I intend to take this opportunity to reflect on the overall progress made since July 2017, when HMICFRS had its remit extended to include inspections of England's fire and rescue services. In particular, I will reflect on progress that we have seen since the start of our second full round of inspections commenced in February 2021.

Part 1 of the annual report provides my assessment of the state of fire and rescue authorities in England. I appreciate your input, to ensure the report concentrates on the things which matter most.

To this end, I should be grateful for your views on the following questions in particular:

- (a) what do you think your fire and rescue service is doing well;

- (b) what do you think are the most pressing areas for reform in the fire sector;
- (c) what changes have occurred or are planned – both locally and nationally – in response to the second round of our inspections; what effect have they had, or do you expect them to have;
- (d) what has your organisation done to implement the learning and recommendations made in the Grenfell Tower Inquiry's Phase 1 report (published on 30 October 2019);
- (e) what challenges are you facing in making your service more efficient and effective and provide public value;
- (f) what are your current people priorities, and what challenges are you facing to implement your people strategy; and
- (g) what do you see as your biggest challenges in making your service more representative of the community it serves?

The plan is to publish the annual assessment in early 2023. It would be greatly appreciated if I could have your views no later than 2 November 2022.

If you have any queries about this request, and indeed wider views on what I should include in my assessment, please let me know.

Yours sincerely,



Andy Cooke QPM DL

His Majesty's Chief Inspector of Fire and Rescue Services