

HMICFRS INSPECTION 2023-25 - UPDATE ON AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT (AFIs)



REPORT OF CHIEF FIRE OFFICER

For Information

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To update Members on the progress against the Areas for Improvement (AFIs) that were identified in the Cleveland Fire Brigade 2023-2025 report from His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS).

2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 Members are asked to note the progress against the HMICFRS Areas for Improvement (AFIs).

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) assess each Fire and Rescue Service in England on their effectiveness, efficiency and how well they look after their people.
- 3.2 Round 3 saw some key changes in the inspection process:
- Removal of Pillar Judgement
 - Introduction of 'Adequate' grading
- 3.3 Cleveland Fire Brigade was inspected by HMICFRS during Quarter 3 2024 and the 2023-25 inspection report was published on 23 April 2025.
- 3.4 Since the publication of the inspection findings, the Brigade has taken a proactive and structured approach to ensure that each recommendation is met with meaningful action, aligned with our commitment to continuous improvement and excellence in service delivery.

4. CURRENT PROGRESS

- 4.1 Following the appointment of the Assistant Director Governance Assurance a 'Health Check' of all 16 AFI's has been completed, this has involved full and detailed scrutiny of the progress to date, including that of those actions which were marked as complete.

- 4.2 To provide specific detail on the progress of each action a number of categories have been added for the Health Check. These categories determine the progress as follows:
- Not yet started
 - Progressing to plan – *successful delivery is highly likely and there is no evidence to suggest that this will change*
 - Progressing with issues - *successful delivery appears feasible but there are some issues which require management attention.*
 - Progressing with significant issues - *cannot be completed as planned due to issues which at this stage cannot be resolved*
 - On hold/suspended
 - Action is complete
- 4.3 Following the detailed scrutiny, one AFI had been re-opened in relation to Senior Managers demonstrating brigade values and behaviours. Historic matters are being addressed across Cleveland Fire Brigade, however there is insufficient evidence to close this AFI at the present time.
- Therefore, out of 16 Areas for Improvement there are eight areas progressing to plan and eight which are progressing with issues, there is a clear rational as to why these areas are progressing with issues, and the Assistant Director Governance and Assurance is confident progress will be made within the tabled timelines.
- 4.4 There is a documented workbook which shows the progress against each AFI outlining the key developments, actions, and outcomes achieved to date, demonstrating our focus on strengthening operational effectiveness, leadership, people management, and community engagement. The attached appendix provides a high-level summary of the current position.

5. NEXT STEPS

- 5.1 The NFCC run quarterly meetings with all Service Liaison Officers (SLOs) to share best practice and learning which the Assistant Director Governance and Assurance attends.
- 5.2 In conjunction with the detailed Health Check, the HMICFRS report was scrutinised by the Assistant Director of Governance and Assurance, to identify areas that could be AFI's of the future. Eleven key points have been identified and will be captured in the overarching plan which will evolve from the new CRMP.

PETER RICKARD

Chief Fire Officer

KRISTINE WARD

ACFO - Director of Strategic Planning, People & Resources

SIMON WEASTELL

ACFO - Director of Service Delivery