

REPORT REFERENCE NO.	PC/23/14
MEETING	PEOPLE COMMITTEE
DATE OF MEETING	30 OCTOBER 2023
SUBJECT OF REPORT	HIS MAJESTY'S INSPECTORATE OF CONSTABULARY & FIRE & RESCUE SERVICES (HMICFRS) CAUSE OF CONCERN AND AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT ACTION PLAN UPDATE
LEAD OFFICER	Chief Fire Officer
RECOMMENDATIONS	<i>That the Committee reviews progress in delivery of the action plan.</i>
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	<p>On Wednesday 27th July 2022 HMICFRS published the DSFRS 2022 inspection report. The inspection report identified one Cause of Concern and 14 Areas for Improvement (AFIs). Of these AFIs, eight have been linked to the People Committee.</p> <p>The paper appended to this report outlines the progress that has been made against the HMICFRS Cause of Concern and Areas for Improvement action plans since the last update to the committee in July 2023. The key highlights are that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Three actions within the Cause of Concern action plan are currently recorded as 'Off Track'. This is due to the following factors: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Information to support departments creating team charters has been published on the intranet and the customer charter has also been published (both internally and externally). These elements of the action will be marked as completed. - The training charter has been submitted to the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Commission for final review, after which it will be published to the wider organisation. This is expected to be completed by 31/10/2023 (01a.07). - Performance management training will be delivered to managers over three sessions on 13/10/2023, 24/10/2023, 03/11/2023. Action 01b.03 will remain as 'off-track' until these have taken place. - The evidence and assurance for the Cause of Concern will be started once all actions have been completed (01b.15).

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two Areas for Improvement, HMI-3.2-202210 (Temporary Promotions) and HMI-3.4-202213 (Selection and Promotions Process), are currently marked as 'In Progress – Off Track'. This is due to the following factors: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A review of the temporary promotions policy is in progress but not yet complete (action 10.03). - A process is currently being designed to monitor the outcomes of future selection and promotions processes to ensure they are fair and transparent, in line with the new policy. This work is in progress but not yet complete (13.04). • One Area for Improvement, HMI-3.4-202215 (High Potential Staff), remains 'paused' due to dependencies on the Area for Improvement around the selection and promotions process (HMI-3.4-202213).
RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS	Considered within the Action Plan where appropriate.
EQUALITY RISKS AND BENEFITS ANALYSIS	Considered within the Action Plan where appropriate.
APPENDICES	A. HMI People Committee Update
BACKGROUND PAPERS	None



DEVON &
SOMERSET
FIRE & RESCUE SERVICE

HMICFRS Action Plan People Committee Update

HMI Team

Devon & Somerset
Fire & Rescue Service

October 2023

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. On Wednesday 27th July 2022 HMICFRS published the DSFRS 2022 inspection report. The inspection report identified one Cause of Concern and 14 Areas for Improvement (AFIs).

1.2. This report provides an update on the Cause of Concern and Areas For Improvement action plans that have been produced following the inspection, which concluded in October 2021.

2. CAUSE OF CONCERN ACTION COMPLETION STATUS

2.1. The Cause of Concern is as follows:

The service has shown a clear intent from the executive board to improve the culture of the service. However, more needs to be done throughout the organisation. We have found evidence of poor behaviours that are not in line with service values. Some staff didn't have the confidence to report these issues. By 31st August 2022, the service should develop an action plan to:

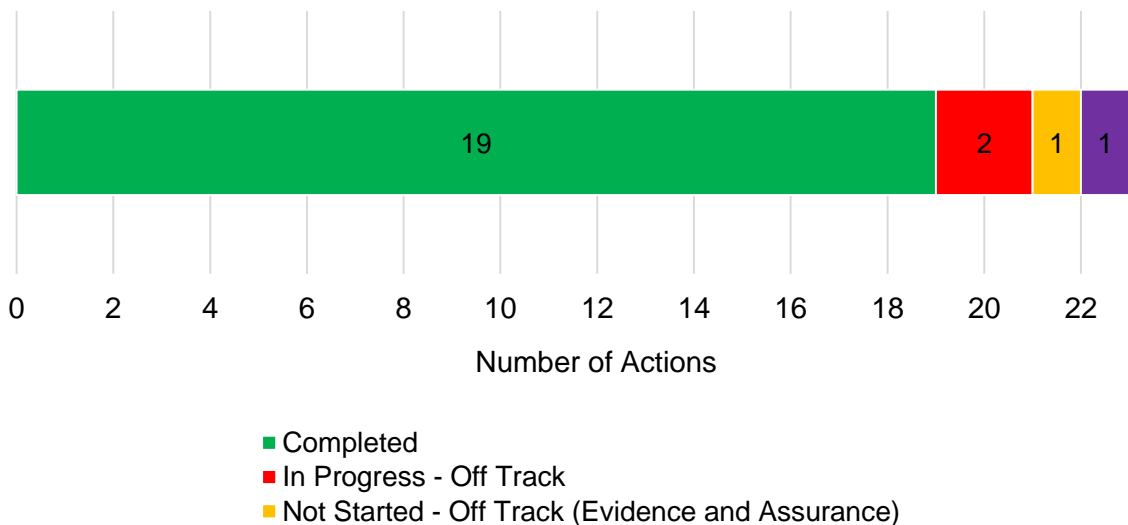
- Make sure that its values and behaviours are understood and demonstrated at all levels of the organisation.
- Make sure that staff are trained and supported to identify and challenge inappropriate behaviour when identified and that they have clear mechanisms in place to raise their concerns.

2.2. 23 actions have been established to address the Cause of Concern. Figure 1 below outlines the completion status of these actions.

2.3. Table 1 below outlines the completion status of these actions in table view.

Table 1: Summary of progress against the individual actions

Figure 1: Cause of Concern Action Status - October 2023



Cause of Concern – Values and Behaviours						
Not started (on track)	Not started (off track)	In progress (on track)	In progress (off track)	Completed	Closed	Paused/ No Longer Required
0 * (↓ from 1)	1* (↑ from 0)	0 (↓ from 2)	2 (→ at 2)	19 (↑ from 17)	0 (→ at 0)	1 (→ at 1)

* Please note that the action which has not yet started is the evidence and assurance required once all other actions have been completed.

2.4. Table 2 outlines the individual actions in progress within the Cause of Concern action plan and their current status.

Table 2:

Ref.	Description	Progress Update	Target Completion	Status
01a.07	Expectations documents x3 (charters) between: a. Trainers and recruits, b. Staff and clients/ customers/ partners (external), c. Staff and staff (internal)	<p>The toolkit for team charters (internal, staff to staff) has been published on the Service intranet and communications have been sent to all staff.</p> <p>The external customer charter is live on the Service intranet and external website.</p> <p>The training charter has been submitted to the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Commission for final review, after which it will be published to the wider organisation. This is expected to be completed by 31/10/2023.</p>	28/02/2023	In Progress – Off Track
01b.03	Performance/ conflict training for managers.	Training was procured by the deadline of 30/09/2023 but not all training sessions will have been delivered until 03/11/2023. Until this date, this action will remain marked as 'off track'.	30/09/2023	In Progress – Off Track

Ref.	Description	Progress Update	Target Completion	Status
01b.15	01 Evidence and Assurance	Evidence and assurance cannot be started until all other actions have been completed.	31/10/2023	In Progress – Off Track

2.5. Table 3 outlines the individual actions within the Cause of Concern action plan that have been marked as completed.

Table 3:

Ref.	Description	Update	Date completed
01a.01	EDI e-learning to be repeated for all staff.	As at 12/04/2023 96% of the workforce has completed the e-learning.	09/02/2023 (Director of Finance, People and Estates)
01a.02	EDI eLearning to be an annual assessment and made a core skill on the competency dashboard.	The EDI e-learning modules have been made an annual required assessment and are a core skill on the competencies dashboard.	26/10/2023 (Director of Finance, People and Estates)
01a.03	New training presentation on values, behaviours and ethics to be delivered to all staff and support to embed the expectations of the organisation (as part of the Safe To programme).	As at 17/07/2023, 95% of individuals have now undertaken this training. This means that the target for completion across the workforce has been reached.	25/05/2023 (Head of People Services)
01a.04	All inappropriate material to be removed from Service premises. This includes inappropriate mugs, which was an issue highlighted by HMICFRS.	All inappropriate material has been removed from Service premises.	30/09/2023 (Deputy Chief Fire Officer)

Ref.	Description	Update	Date completed
01a.05	Mandatory PPD questions to be introduced: Have you experienced or witnessed any bullying, harassment or unwanted behaviour since our last meeting? Have you seen any inappropriate material?	Mandatory PPD questions have now been introduced and added to the PPD system.	20/09/2022 (Assistant Chief Fire Officer)
01a.06	PPDs to be completed in line with policy and recorded on Workbench.	A revised PPD process was launched to the Service in March 2023. This process is now being reviewed ahead of the launch of PPDs for the next quarter.	26/06/2023 (Chief Fire Officer)
01a.08	Comms team to build a core brief on culture to be included in a regular programme of awareness (produced on a quarterly basis – sent to all stations and departments in advance and discussed during station and department visits).	The core brief has been informed by the Target Operating Model and outlines Service priorities moving forward.	25/05/2023 (Chief Fire Officer)
01b.01	Pre-recorded quarterly updates to all staff (leading conversations tone) on expectations to reinforce core brief, with CFO and DCFO. Followed up by face-to-face engagement session (See 01b.02).	This action has been marked as 'no longer required' as it has been merged with action 01a.08 'Comms team to build a core brief on culture to be included in a regular programme of awareness (produced on a quarterly basis – sent to all stations and departments in advance and discussed during station and department visits).'	31/12/2022 N/A

Ref.	Description	Update	Date completed
01b.02	Senior Managers (SM and equivalent, and above) to attend a leading conversations presentation which will include input on expected behaviours, role modelling and accountability via an external trainer (follow up to quarterly process).	138 people attended out of a possible 208 members of staff at SM/ Grade 7. The presentations from the event are available via Yammer for those unable to attend the event.	03/01/2023 (Deputy Chief Fire Officer)
01b.04	Biannual communication to the workforce on concluded disciplinary sanctions including sanctions and rationale for those sanctions.	An update on investigations, including the primary allegation and outcome, was included in the Chief Fire Officer blog on Friday 01/09/2023. This covered the period 01/01/2023 to 30/06/2023. This will now be a biannual communication.	01/09/2023 (Chief Fire Officer)
01b.05	Report to the Executive Board on grievance and disciplinary cases to include type of case, speed of completion and outcome (e.g. improve speed of investigations and reconsider the use of outside investigators).	Report presented to the Executive Board on 15/12/2022.	13/01/2023 (Director of Finance, People and Estates)
01b.06	Every presentation to include a slide on values, expected behaviours and ethics.	The standard DSFRS presentation template now includes a slide on values, expected behaviours and ethics.	27/02/2023 (Deputy Chief Fire Officer)
01b.07	Create and publish effective confidential reporting mechanisms which include several avenues for staff. To include, a confidential reporting line directly to the DCFO, direct to	The confidential reporting line was launched on 01/02/2023 in a blog by the CFO. The reporting line is open to all members of staff and involves leaving a message via voicemail. In the blog, the CFO also outlined that the Service is	06/03/2023 (Deputy Chief Fire Officer)

Ref.	Description	Update	Date completed
	ACAS, HMICFRS confidential reporting line, and whistle blowing policy.	also welcoming feedback on concerns via email or post. The Respect and Fairness Toolkit was also linked.	
01b.08	Establish 'Speak Up' guardians in each group and workplace that are accessible to all staff. Individuals will be interviewed and selected by senior staff (training allowance required). Individuals will support station visits and training/awareness.	Freedom to Speak Up Guardians have now been established and were launched in Service wide communications on Monday 22/05/2023.	24/05/2023 (Assistant Chief Fie Officer)
01b.09	All recruitment and selection processes will include elements to assess applicants' cultural awareness and how this links to the Service Values. Internal processes, including promotional processes, will include questions and/or assessment to evidence cultural awareness and how applicants demonstrate and/or embed behaviours that link to the Service Values, Code of Ethics and NFCC leadership framework.	<p>All interviews now include questions on cultural awareness and how applicants demonstrate and/or embed behaviours that link to the Service Values, Code of Ethics and NFCC leadership framework.</p> <p>All promotion processes now include an impact statement built into the actual application. This focuses on assessment to evidence cultural awareness and how applicants demonstrate and/or embed behaviours that link to the Service Values, Code of Ethics and NFCC leadership framework and how they meet the person specification and essential/desirable criteria.</p>	24/07/2023 (Director of Finance, People and Estates)

Ref.	Description	Update	Date completed
01b.10	Equality, Diversity and Inclusion commission to be established. To include representation from representative bodies, staff support groups and key leaders.	The Equality, Diversity and Inclusion commission has been established. This includes representation from representative bodies, staff support groups and service leaders.	30/09/2022 (Deputy Chief Fire Officer)
01b.11	Exit process to be formalised. This to include specific questions on cultural improvements.	The new exit policy is now live, including a link to a Microsoft Forms survey for individuals to complete once their resignation is acknowledged. The survey includes questions on values, behaviours, and ethics.	01/06/2023 (Head of People Services)
01b.12	Revise induction process for all staff to include the setting of expectations of behaviour, values and ethics.	The induction process has been revised and now included training for the setting of expectations around values, ethics and behaviours. The first session to include this training was completed on 28/06/2023.	28/06/2023 (Head of People Services)
01b.13	To identify where other services are doing well in the People Pillar and State of Fire Annual Review. Contact them to understand the areas of best practice that they have implemented and how this may improve our Service.	Best practice has been identified and reviewed with SLT leads, linking to current actions within the HMICFRS action plan.	20/12/2022 (Deputy Chief Fire Officer)

Ref.	Description	Update	Date completed
01b.14	To review best practice with our Service leads in order to enhance improvement plans.	Best practice has been identified and reviewed with SLT leads, linking to current actions within the HMICFRS action plan.	12/01/2022

3. **AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT ACTION PLAN COMPLETION STATUS**

3.1. Table 4 lists the Areas For Improvement linked to the People Committee and their individual implementation status.

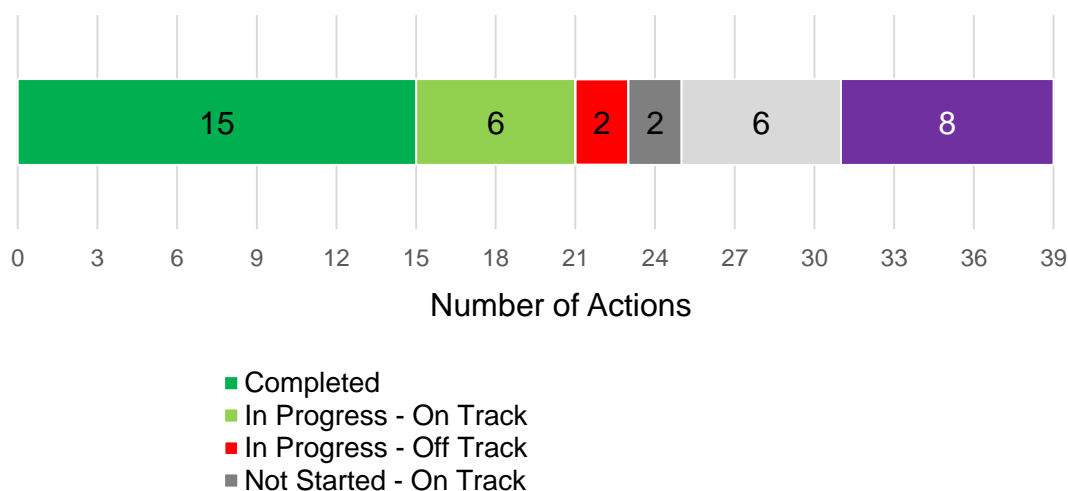
Table 4:

Reference	Description	Target Completion	Status
HMI-3.1-202208	The service should monitor secondary contracts to make sure working hours are not exceeded.	31/01/2024	In Progress – On Track
HMI-3.2-202209	The service should make sure its workforce plan takes full account of the necessary skills and capabilities to carry out the integrated risk management plan.	30/09/2024	In Progress – On Track
HMI-3.2-202210	The service should address the high number of staff in temporary promotion positions.	30/09/2023 31/12/2023	In Progress – Off Track
HMI-3.3-202211	The service should make sure that it has effective grievance procedures. It should identify and implement ways to improve staff confidence in the grievance process.	31/01/2024	In Progress – On Track
HMI-3.3-202212	The service should improve staff understanding of the purpose and benefits of positive action.	30/09/2023	Completed
HMI-3.4-202213	The service should make sure its selection, development and promotion of staff is open and fair, and that feedback is available to staff.	31/01/2025	In Progress – Off Track

Reference	Description	Target Completion	Status
HMI-3.4-202214	The service should improve all staff understanding and application of the performance development review process.	30/06/2024	In Progress – On Track
HMI-3.4-202215	The service should put in place an open and fair process to identify, develop and support high-potential staff and aspiring leaders.	Next review scheduled 17/11/2023	Paused

3.2. Figure 2 below outlines the completion status of all actions designed to address the Areas For Improvement linked to the People Committee, as outlined above.

Figure 2: People Committee Action Status - October 2023



3.3. Table 5 below outlines the completion status of these actions in table view.

Table 5: Summary of progress against the individual actions						
Areas for Improvement (People Committee)						
Not started (on track)	Not started (off track)	In progress (on track)	In progress (off track)	Completed	Closed	Paused/ No Longer Required
8* (↓ from 9)	0 (→ at 0)	6 (↓ from 13)	2 (↑ from 0)	15 (↑ from 9)	0 (→ at 0)	8 (→ at 8)

* Please note that six of the actions which have not yet started are the evidence and assurance required once all other actions have been completed.

4. **ACTION DEADLINE EXTENSIONS**

- 4.1. Table 6 below outlines one area for improvement which has had a deadline extension since the last report to the People Committee.

Table 6:

Improvement Area	Status
HMI-3.2-202210 – Temporary Promotions	In Progress – Off Track
Reason for pause	
One action within this area for improvement was pushed back to allow for additional data to be gathered on the effectiveness of a solution implemented to support reducing the number of temporary promotions due to absent staff. This action has now been completed.	

5. **PAUSED IMPROVEMENT AREAS**

- 5.1. Table 7 below outlines one improvement area which remains 'paused'.

Table 7:

Improvement Area	Status
HMI-3.4-202215 – High-Potential Staff (Area for Improvement)	Paused
Reason for pause	
<p>This improvement area has been paused until work has been completed on the revised selection and promotions process. ACFO Gerald Taylor has approved the pausing of this improvement area (HMI-3.4-202215) and all actions within it (initial target completion date 31 July 2023).</p> <p>A review of the status of this area for improvement was completed on 18/08/2023 with the following update:</p> <p>All actions under HMI-3.4-202215 (High Potential Staff) will remain paused whilst work continues on assessment centres and the development processes to ensure that they are suitable and remain consistent. High potential will be progressed once the new assessment centres have been run, evaluated, and reviewed. Research into potential High Potential schemes will be undertaken by the People Development Team and the Recruitment Team prior to the start of this action taking place. The next paused action review will be scheduled for 17/11/2023.</p>	