

REPORT REFERENCE NO.	PC/24/3
MEETING	PEOPLE COMMITTEE
DATE OF MEETING	24 JANUARY 2024
SUBJECT OF REPORT	PEOPLE & CULTURE UPDATE
LEAD OFFICER	Chief Fire Officer
RECOMMENDATIONS	<i>That the Committee reviews progress in delivery of the action plan.</i>
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	<p>On Friday 31 March 2023, HMICFRS published a report into the values and culture in fire and rescue services. The report contains 35 recommendations, 1 specific for the police, 14 which require action at a national level and 20 which are specific for fire and rescue services.</p> <p>The paper appended to this report outlines the progress that has been made against these recommendations since the last update to the committee in October 2023. The key highlights are that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Three recommendations remain 'In Progress' as the recommendation deadlines have now passed. This is due to the following factors: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Recommendations 24 (Monitoring and Evaluating Feedback) and 32 (Diversity in succession planning) remain 'In Progress' until further action has been taken. - People Services are currently considering a process and timelines for ensuring that DSFRS meet the new national requirements for DBS checks. Once this timeline has been established, contact will be made with HMICFRS to outline actions being taken, in line with the national standards, and a revised completion date.
RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS	Considered within the Action Plan where appropriate.
EQUALITY RISKS AND BENEFITS ANALYSIS	Considered within the Action Plan where appropriate.
APPENDICES	Nil.
BACKGROUND PAPERS	HMICFRS Report – Values and Culture in Fire and Rescue Services

1. **INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1. On Friday 31 March 2023, HMICFRS published a report into the values and culture in fire and rescue services. The report contains 35 recommendations, 1 specific for the police, 14 which require action at a national level and 19 which are specific for fire and rescue services.
- 1.2. This report provides an update on the action plan to address these recommendations.

2. **CULTURE RECOMMENDATIONS COMPLETION STATUS**

- 2.1 An update has been provided to HMICFRS, via their online document sharing platform, detailing the actions the Service has taken against each of the 20 recommendations for the fire and rescue sector.
- 2.2 Table 1 below outlines the recommendations which have been marked as 'Closed' since the last update to the People Committee in October 2023.

Table 1:

DSFRS Ref.	Description	Deadline	Status
REC26	Management and leadership training	01/08/2023	Closed
REC33	Progression of non-operational staff	01/08/2023	Closed

- 2.3 Figure 1 below outlines current progress against addressing these recommendations (as at 17/07/2023), as reported to HMICFRS, with the colour coding as follows:
- Blue (B): Closed (evidence has been reviewed by the HMICFRS Governance Board and the Executive Board has approved the closure)
 - Dark Green (DG): Completed (the HMICFRS Governance Board will now review the evidence provided to determine whether the recommendation can be marked as 'closed')
 - Green (G): In Progress On-Track
 - Amber (A): In Progress (recommendation deadline not met)
 - Grey (GY): Not Started On-Track

Figure 1: HMICFRS Culture Recommendations Completion Status

Recommendation 1 Confidential Reporting (B)	Recommendation 3 Support for individuals raising concerns (B)	Recommendation 4 Handling of raised concerns (DG)
Recommendation 5 How to raise concerns (B) (staff and public)	Recommendation 9 Background Checks (A)	Recommendation 12 Disclosure, complaint and (GY) grievance standard
Recommendation 14 Misconduct Allegations (GY) standard	Recommendation 17 Allegations of staff (B) gross misconduct	Recommendation 18 Support during ongoing (B) investigations
Recommendation 20 Fire Standards (B)	Recommendation 21 360 Feedback (B) (ACFO and above)	Recommendation 22 360 Feedback (B) (all managers)
Recommendation 23 Feedback from staff (B)	Recommendation 24 Monitoring and (A) Evaluating Feedback	Recommendation 26 Management and (B) Leadership Training
Recommendation 27 Equality Impact (B) Assessments	Recommendation 28 Equality and Diversity (B) Data	Recommendation 32 Diversity in succession (A) planning
	Recommendation 33 Progression of non- (B) operational staff	Recommendation 34 Core Code of Ethics (B)

3. CULTURE RECOMMENDATIONS WHICH ARE 'IN PROGRESS' (DEADLINE NOT MET)

- 3.1. Table 2 below outlines the recommendations which are currently marked as 'In Progress' where the recommendation deadline has not been met. Factors impacting the delivery of actions to address these recommendations are detailed in Table 3.

Table 2:

DSFRS Ref.	Description	Deadline	Status
REC32	Diversity in succession planning	01/06/2023	In Progress
REC24	Monitoring and evaluating feedback	01/10/2023	In Progress
REC09	Background checks	01/01/2024	In Progress

4. **CULTURE RECOMMENDATION ACTIONS WHICH ARE 'OFF TRACK'**

- 4.1. Table 3 below outlines the individual actions within the culture recommendations action plan that are marked as 'In Progress – Off Track' and directly impact the completion of a recommendation.

Table 3:

Ref.	Description	Factors impacting action delivery
REC09.01	Review background check arrangements to make sure that suitable and sufficient background checks are in place to safeguard staff and communities.	All staff have a DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) check on appointment appropriate to their role. As part of the pre-employment checks a 'basic' DBS had to be completed for all staff. There are some roles which require an 'enhanced' DBS and this has been completed.
REC09.02	Ensure that appropriate DBS check requests have been submitted for all existing, new staff, and volunteers, according to their roles as identified by the Fire Standards Board.	<p>The amendment to the DBS criteria in July 2023 has meant that the Service can now undertake a 'standard' check for staff. All new starters from July 2023 have now received a 'standard' check and this will be the process moving forward. The process for reviewing and updating DBS checks to standard for existing staff, as defined in the outline of roles from the National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC), is currently being developed.</p> <p>Due to the timeframe around the change of criteria the Service have been unable to meet the recommendation deadline, which is a national issue. People</p>

		Services are currently considering a process and timelines for ensuring that DSFRS meet the new requirements. Once this timeline has been established, contact will be made with HMICFRS to outline actions being taken and a revised completion date.
REC32.02	REC32 Evidence and Assurance (Diversity in succession planning)	Evidence and assurance is off track as actions to address the recommendation have not been completed in line with the deadline of 01/06/2023.
REC24.02	REC24 Evidence and Assurance (Monitoring and Evaluating Feedback)	Evidence and assurance is off track as actions to address the recommendation have not been completed in line with the deadline of 01/10/2023.

GAVIN ELLIS
Chief Fire Officer