

REPORT REFERENCE NO.	PC/25/2
MEETING	PEOPLE COMMITTEE
DATE OF MEETING	24 JANUARY 2025
SUBJECT OF REPORT	HIS MAJESTY'S INSPECTORATE OF CONSTABULARY & FIRE & RESCUE SERVICES (HMICFRS) 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 27th July 2022 His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) published the DSFRS 2022 Inspection Report. The inspection report identified one Cause of Concern and 14 Areas for Improvement (AFIs). Of the 14 AFIs, eight have been linked to the People Committee.</p> <p>Since the inspection report, two national thematic reports have been published by HMICFRS. The first, published on 31 March 2023, examined the values and culture in fire and rescue services. The second, published on 01 August 2024, examined standards of behaviour and the handling of misconduct in fire and rescue services.</p> <p>This report outlines the progress that has been made against the HMICFRS Areas for Improvement and national recommendations since the last update to the Committee in October 2024.</p>
RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS	Considered within the Action Plan where appropriate.
EQUALITY RISKS AND BENEFITS ANALYSIS	Considered within the Action Plan where appropriate.
APPENDICES	None.
BACKGROUND PAPERS	None.

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. On 27th July 2022 His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (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.
- 1.2. On 31 March 2023, HMICFRS published a report into the values and culture in fire and rescue services. The report contained 35 recommendations, 1 specific for the Police, 14 which required action at a national level and 20 which were specific for fire and rescue services.
- 1.3. 01 August 2024 HMICFRS published a report into standards of behaviour and the handling of misconduct in fire and rescue services. The report contained 15 recommendations to Chief Fire Officers, Fire and Rescue Authorities and others.
- 1.4. This report outlines the progress that has been made against the HMICFRS Areas for Improvement and national recommendations since the last update to the Committee on 18 October 2024.

2. CAUSE OF CONCERN ACTION COMPLETION STATUS

- 2.1 The Cause of Concern was 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 All actions under the cause of concern have now been marked as completed. The recommendation for closure was approved by Executive Board on 19/03/2024.
- 2.3 The Cause of Concern has now been transitioned into Service business as usual. Progress on improving organisational culture will continue to be an area of focus.

3. AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT ACTION PLAN COMPLETION STATUS

- 3.1. Table 1 lists the open Areas for Improvement linked to the People Committee and their individual status.
- 3.2. Areas for Improvement closed since the last report to the committee: 0

3.3. Total Areas for Improvement closed: 2 (of 8)

Table 1: Open areas for Improvement linked to the People Committee

Reference	Description	Target Completion	Status
HMI-3.1-202208	Secondary Contracts	30/09/2024 31/01/2025	In Progress – On Track
HMI-3.2-202210	Temporary Promotions		
HMI-3.4-202213	Selection and Promotions Process		
HMI-3.2-202209	Workforce Planning	30/09/2024 31/12/2024 31/03/2025	In Progress – On Track
HMI-3.4-202214	PDR Process	30/04/2024 30/06/2024 30/11/2024 31/05/2025	In Progress – On Track
HMI-3.4-202215	High Potential Staff	TBC	Paused

4. VALUES AND CULTURE RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1. HMICFRS required services to provide a final update on the status and progress against each of the values and culture recommendations by Tuesday 19 March 2024. The recommendations outlined in Table 2 overleaf have remained marked as 'In Progress'.
- 4.2. Recommendations closed since the last report to the committee: 0
- 4.3. Total recommendations closed: 16 (of 20)

Table 2: HMICFRS Values & Culture “In progress” recommendations

Reference	Description	Target Completion	Status
REC09	Background checks		In Progress – On Track
REC12	Staff disclosure, complaint and grievance handling standard	30/11/2024 31/01/2025	
REC14	Misconduct allegations standard		
REC32	Diversity in succession planning	01/01/2024 31/12/2024 31/03/2025	In Progress – On Track

5. STANDARDS OF BEHAVIOUR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 5.1. Table 3 overleaf lists the recommendations made in the HMICFRS report on standards of behaviour and the handling of misconduct and their individual status. The table outlines the deadline set by HMICFRS and also the internal target completion date (TCD) set by the Service.
- 5.2. Recommendations closed since the last report to the committee: 1
- 5.3. Total recommendations closed: 3 (of 16)
- 5.4. Dates marked with an asterisk (*) indicate that the Service is ‘Off Track’ for completion of the recommendation by that date.

Table 3: HMICFRS Standards of Behaviour Target Completion Dates

Reference	Description	Deadline	TCD
REC02	Probationary Policy	01/02/2025	Closed
REC12	Welfare Support	31/08/2024	Closed
REC13a	Appeals Process	01/11/2024	Closed
REC01	Code of Ethics (SB)	01/02/2025*	30/06/2025
REC03	Watch Movements	01/02/2025*	30/04/2025
REC04	Professional Standards	01/02/2025	01/02/2025
REC05	Raising a Concern	01/11/2024*	TBC
REC06	Training for Managers	01/02/2025	01/02/2025
REC07	Misconduct Policies	01/05/2024	31/03/2025
REC08	Allegations of Misconduct	01/11/2024*	31/03/2025
REC09	Case Management	01/08/2025	01/08/2025
REC10	Misconduct Investigations	01/05/2025	01/05/2025
REC11	Misconduct Investigation Training	01/05/2025	01/05/2025
REC13b	Appeals Training	01/02/2025	01/02/2025
REC14	Performance Against Misconduct Issues	01/11/2025	01/04/2025
REC15	Learning from Misconduct	01/02/2025	01/02/2025

6. **ACTION DEADLINE EXTENSIONS**

- 6.1. Table 4 overleaf outlines four areas which have had a deadline extension since the last report to the People Committee.

Table 4: Extended deadlines since the last report to Committee

Reference	Improvement Area
HMI-3.1-202208	Secondary Contracts
HMI-3.2-202210	Temporary Promotions
HMI-3.4-202213	Selection and Promotions Process
Reason for deadline extension	
The consultation for the new recruitment policy has now closed. The People Services team are currently working through the feedback and it is expected that the final version will be published by 31/01/2024.	

Reference	Improvement Area
HMI-3.2-202209	Workforce Planning
REC32	Diversity in succession planning
Reason for deadline extension	
The workforce strategy is in development and a draft has been created. Senior Leadership Team stakeholders are being engaged. Following completion and launch of the strategy, the Workforce Plan and process will be developed, refined and launched by 31st March 2025. Each department will then develop a workforce plan, using the strategy and planning template, which will be fed into the Strategic Workforce Planning Group	

Reference	Improvement Area
HMI-3.4-202214	PDR Process
Reason for deadline extension	
Professional Standards Board recommended that this area for improvement remains open until its evaluation and review has been completed. To allow time for this to take place, the target completion date has been moved to 31/05/2025.	

Reference	Improvement Area
REC09	Background checks
REC12	Staff disclosure, complaint and grievance handling standard
REC14	Misconduct allegations standard
Reason for deadline extension	
Update to be provided during the People Committee meeting by People Services.	

GAVIN ELLIS
Chief Fire Officer