

REPORT OF THE LANCASHIRE COMBINED FIRE AUTHORITY 17TH DECEMBER 2018

1. HER MAJESTY'S INSPECTORATE OF CONSTABULARY, FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICES (HMICFRS)

The Policing and Crime Act 2017 sets out that HMICFRS will inspect and report on the efficiency and effectiveness of Fire and Rescue Authorities in England. In July 2017, HMICFRS extended this remit to include inspections of England's Fire and Rescue Services to assess and report on the efficiency, effectiveness and people of the 45 Fire and Rescue Services in England.

Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service (LFRS) was in the first of three tranches of inspections which took place during 9 - 13 July 2018 and involved the HMICFRS team of inspectors speaking to: staff across the organisation, selected partner agencies, the Representative Bodies, the Executive Board and the Chairman. This was facilitated during the Winter Hill deployment and was managed with the commitment of staff flexibility to ensure a suitable and sufficient inspection week. A strategic debrief took place on the 13 July at the end of the inspection week and was delivered to Executive Board members and the Chairman. Further data was requested and returned to HMICFRS on 14 July 2018.

The final outcome report was given a revised embargo of 20 December 2018; therefore the Authority was updated on the results of the Inspection results under part 2 of the agenda.

Subsequent to the meeting, the published report is now available on the HMICFRS website:

<https://www.justiceinspectors.gov.uk/hmicfrs/wp-content/uploads/lancashire-fire-and-rescue-service-report-2018-19.pdf>

The Authority is delighted with the outcome of the report. This independently rates Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service as the best fire and rescue service that has been inspected in the country to date; being the only Service to be given an 'outstanding' in any category with all other areas rated as 'good'. We are particularly proud that the Service is 'outstanding' in the area of 'promoting the right values and culture' which is a reflection of the standards of our staff and leadership. Our professionalism is what sets us apart from other organisations and the reason the Service is held in such high regard by our communities and partners.

2. ANNUAL STATEMENT OF ASSURANCE

The Fire and Rescue National Framework for England (2018) sets out the Government's high level expectations, priorities and objectives for Fire and Rescue Authorities (FRA's) in England. Included within the framework is the requirement on all FRA's to provide assurance on financial, governance and operational matters.

The Statement of Assurance was considered and approved by Members. It provided the required accountability and transparency to our communities and the Government that LFRS continued to deliver efficient, effective value for money services.

This statement sat alongside the Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP), Statement of Accounts, the Annual Governance Statement, the Annual Service Plan and Annual Progress Report. It detailed what measures were in place to assure that the Combined Fire Authority's performance was efficient, economic, and effective and provided further evidence that LFRS continued to deliver under the expectations detailed within both the National Framework and its own IRMP.

3. FIRE PROTECTION REPORTS

A report detailing prosecutions in respect of fire safety management failures and arson related incidents within the period 1 September 2018 to 30 November 2018 was provided.

There were 3 current prosecutions awaiting trial and 3 prosecution cases being prepared. Fire protection and business support information included that LFRS now had 11 registered Primary Authority Scheme partners and Members noted that there were 4 arson convictions during the period which included details of a conviction that involved a serving prisoner. This incident was worthy of special note as it was highly unusual for a prisoner serving a current sentence to be charged and committed to Court for trial for starting a fire within a prison unless it was a major incident. This was not just a Lancashire problem, but a National problem.

This conviction sent a clear message that cell fires would not be tolerated and could result in an additional prison sentence. Since this conviction, fires at HMP Lancaster Farms have reduced dramatically as have incidents at other prisons across Lancashire and work continues with other prisons and Police departments to encourage any further cases be progressed to court.

4. URGENT BUSINESS - COLLABORATION

The Chief Fire Officer advised that a letter addressed to the Chairman had been received from the Police and Crime Commissioner on 14 December 2018 requesting a meeting. The letter was in response to a letter sent to him on 30 August 2018 (which had been confirmed as received on 31 August 2018 and) which had been resent on 26 November 2018.

The Chief Fire Officer confirmed that the Service continued to work in collaboration with partners including other Blue Light organisations in order to deliver the most effective and efficient services. The workstreams identified by the Blue Light Collaboration Project with Lancashire Constabulary continued, with significant projects reported to the Planning Committee for a decision.

FRANK DE MOLFETTA
Chairman

LFRS
Fulwood