



Northumberland County Council

COMMITTEE AND PLACE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

DATE: 25TH JULY 2018

TITLE OF REPORT

Home Office Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS)

Report of Chief Fire Officer Paul Hedley

Cabinet Member: John Riddle

Purpose of report - Information

Recommendations - To consider the report contents, see attached document, and likely areas of inspection focus

Link to Corporate Plan

This report is relevant to the following priorities in the NCC Corporate Plan 2018-2021:

- Ensuring our services are customer focused
- Supporting communities and staff to embrace change and innovation
- Involving communities and staff in decisions which affect them
- Supporting communities to feel safe
- Creating a healthy and positive working environment

Key issues - Independent scrutiny of Fire and Rescue Services.

Background -

Since April 2018, Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) has been awarded responsibility for inspecting fire and rescue services (FRSs) in England, as detailed in the Fire and Rescue National Framework for England 2018. The chief fire and rescue inspector and inspectors of fire and rescue authorities in England have powers of inspection given to them by the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004, as amended by the Policing and Crime Act 2017. The inspection of

FRSs will allow the public to see how well their local fire and rescue service is performing and improving.

Objectives for the inspection of FRSs will be to:

- Improve the services they provide and to ensure they reduce the risks identified by local communities;
- Identify good practice, transformation and areas for improvement; and
- Improve transparency and accountability to the communities they serve.

Inspections will focus on the effectiveness and efficiency of fire and rescue services and each Service will be given a graded judgement (outstanding, good, requires improvement or inadequate). For context, one in four police forces received a 'requires improvement' during the most recent inspection programme.

HMICFRS has carried out three pilot inspections January - March 2018, in order to test its methodology. The full inspection programme commenced April 2018 and, during the following 18 months, all 45 fire and rescue services in England will be inspected. Inspections will be carried out in tranches of 15. It has been confirmed that Northumberland Fire and Rescue Service (NFRS) will be inspected in the second tranche, during autumn/winter of 2018.

There are five HMI regions. Northumberland sits within Northern Region, of which Matt Parr has been temporarily appointed as HMI. Each service has been appointed a Service Liaison Lead (SLL) who liaises between HMICFRS and FRSs. Matt Reavill has been appointed SLL for Durham and Darlington, Northumberland, and Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Services. The SLL has already begun his engagement with the service. NFRS has arranged three engagement days on 24 April, 26 June and 25 July 2018.

HMICFRS inspection will consider a fire and rescue service's:

- efficiency;
- effectiveness; and
- leadership

HMI's will inspect:

- **operational service delivery** (prevention, protection, resilience, response);
- **organisational effectiveness** (leadership, training, diversity, values and culture); and
- **efficiency** (value for money, matching resources to meet demand, collaboration).

Implications

Impact of an inadequate rating with action plan for any areas of concern.

Impact of requires improvement rating with action plan for any areas of improvement.

| | |
|---|---|
| Policy | N/A |
| Finance and value for money | Seconded staff and back fill of positions, salary costs |
| Legal | The Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004, The Policing and Crime Act 2017. |
| Procurement | N/A |
| Human Resources | Internal team established to fulfill the inspectorate requirements |
| Property | Office maintained with Service Headquarters for the HMICFRS team |
| Equalities (Impact Assessment attached) | N/A |
| Risk Assessment | N/A |
| Crime & Disorder | N/A |
| Customer Consideration | Adverse scoring of areas of service provision. |
| Carbon reduction | N/A |
| Wards | N/A |

Background papers:

The Fire and Rescue Service Act 2004

The Policing and Crime Act 2017

Home Office Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services Report (attached)

Report sign off.

Authors must ensure that officers and members have agreed the content of the report:

| | initials |
|--|----------|
| Monitoring Officer/Legal | |
| Executive Director of Finance & S151 Officer | |
| Relevant Executive Director | |
| Chief Executive | |
| Portfolio Holder(s) | |

Author and Contact Details

Deborah Brown,
Community Safety Department,
Northumberland Fire and Rescue Service,
West Hartford Community Fire Station and Service Headquarters,
West Hartford,
Cramlington,
Northumberland.

Tel - 01670 621133