

GMCA Audit Committee

Date: 27 July 2022
Subject: HMICFRS Inspection Report Update
Report of: DCFO Ben Norman

PURPOSE OF REPORT

This paper provides a summary of Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) Greater Manchester Fire & Rescue (GMFRS) 2021 round 2 inspection report published on 15th December 2021 and the ongoing improvement activities to address the findings in the report.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

Members are asked to:

- Note the contents of the summary report and the internal improvement action plan (Appendix A) and provide any feedback.

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Equalities Impact, Carbon, and Sustainability Assessment:

N/A

Risk Management

N/A

Legal Considerations

N/A

Financial Consequences - Capital

N/A

Financial Consequences - Revenue

N/A

Number of attachments included in the report:

BACKGROUND PAPERS:

[HMICFRS Tranche 1 Inspections](#)










[HMICFRS Annual State of Fire 2021 report](#)

[GMFRS Inspection Report](#)

TRACKING/PROCESS		
Does this report relate to a major strategic decision, as set out in the GMCA Constitution		Yes/No
EXEMPTION FROM CALL IN		
Are there any aspects in this report which means it should be considered to be exempt from call in by the relevant Scrutiny Committee on the grounds of urgency?		Yes/No
TfGMC	Overview & Scrutiny Committee	
N/A	N/A	

INTRODUCTION

1. GMFRS was formally notified on the 14th January 2021, that it had been placed in Tranche 1 of the 2021/22 inspection programme, with formal inspection activities commencing on the 7th June 2021, and concluded on the 23rd July 2021 with the CFO debrief.
2. GMFRS received a copy of the draft report for its Pre-Publication Check (PPC) in October 2021. Feedback and comments in response to the PPC were provided to the HMICFRS, and of the 8 comments submitted:
 - 6 were 'accepted' and changes made
 - 1 was 'partially accepted' and the respective narrative changed
 - 1 (MTA) was 'noted' and a 'separate email sent regarding this'
3. HMICFRS grades FRSs using the following categories of graded judgment:
 - Outstanding
 - Good
 - Requires Improvement
 - Inadequate
4. The table below details the comparisons between the two inspection outcomes:

Pillar	2020/21 Inspection	2018/19 Inspection
 Effectiveness	 Requires improvement	 Requires improvement
 Efficiency	 Requires improvement	 Requires improvement
 People	 Good	 Requires Improvement

5. Under these three pillars the inspection report gives a grading for each of the 11 areas;
 - Good (6)
 - Requires improvement (5)
 - Inadequate (0)

REPORT HEADLINES

6. The HMICFS found that GMFRS is good at:
 - Looking after its staff
 - Understanding fire and other risks
 - Responding to fires and other emergencies
 - Promoting its values throughout the organisation
 - The inspection report recognises the significant progress made in terms of equality, diversity, and inclusivity, but also the confidence that staff across the Service have in the new leadership team.

7. The inspection report identifies two areas of 'innovative practice', these are:
 - An app to display operational flashcards on both mobile data terminals and officers' mobile phones. This allows instant access to standard operating procedures. (pg.9)
 - The service has introduced a Freedom to Speak Guardian – an initiative used by the NHS – for staff to have an informal way to give feedback to the service. (pg.34).

8. Also recognised is the significant progress GMFRS has made under the People pillar, moving from Requires Improvement to Good. The HMICFRS have removed (resolved) the cause of concern for the People pillar issued in 2019 based on the evidence obtained and demonstrated during the 2021 inspection. We have also made substantial progress with regards ensuring fairness and promoting diversity, where we have moved from Inadequate to Good.

9. The report further contains **16 'areas for improvement'** and **one 'cause of concern'**. These are across all areas of inspection with the exception of two areas (Making the FRS affordable now and in the future, Getting the right people with the right skills) not containing any areas of improvement.

10. There are a number of reoccurring 'areas of improvement' that were originally identified during the 2019 inspection, these include, but not limited to;
 - **Effectiveness - Prevention** – *“The service needs to target its most vulnerable people for home fire safety visits”* (pg. 12)
 - **Effectiveness - Protection** – *“The service should ensure it allocates enough resources to a prioritised and risk-based inspection programme”*. (pg. 14)
 - **People** – *“The Service should put in place an open and fair process to identify, develop and support high-potential staff and aspiring leaders”* (pg. 36)

11. Also recognised is the significant progress GMFRS has made under the People pillar, moving from Requires Improvement to Good. The HMICFRS have removed (resolved) the cause of concern for the People pillar issued in 2019 based on the evidence obtained and demonstrated during the 2021 inspection. We have also made substantial progress with regards ensuring fairness and promoting diversity, where we have moved from Inadequate to Good.

CURRENT POSITION

12. Following the receipt of the report an internal improvement action plan was developed detailing all the activities that are being undertaken to respond to the finding of the inspection report. A copy of this is provided in Appendix A.

13. All areas for improvement have been incorporated into relevant directorate action plans and linked back to the priorities set out in the Annual Delivery Plan 22-23. Progress against these actions are monitored and tracked through our current governance arrangements - directorate functional boards, SLT meetings and Deputy Mayors Fire Executive meetings.

14. A dedicated Marauding Terrorist Attack (MTA) project team was established to progress the activities with regards the cause of concern. This team meets fortnightly and is supported from colleagues from across the Service and our trade union representatives.

15. The project is focused around three broad areas: 1) Training, 2) Appliances and Equipment, 3) Policies and Procedures.

16. Alongside the MTA project activities, discussions were ongoing with the Fire Brigades Union (FBU) regarding our proposals regarding the provision of an MTA capability for Greater Manchester. This was subject to a local ballot, but with a recommendation for members to accept.

17. The FBU ballot closed on 7th February with a positive result enabling GMFRS to progress activities to enhance our operating model. Following this the Collective Agreement with the FBU was signed on the 5th April.

18. MTA Training commenced on the 11th April. This training consists of two days of trauma training and one day MTA training and is supported by instructors from Greater Manchester Police Firearms Unit and colleagues from North West Ambulance Service. GMFRS NILO's also attend and participate in day 3 MTA training.

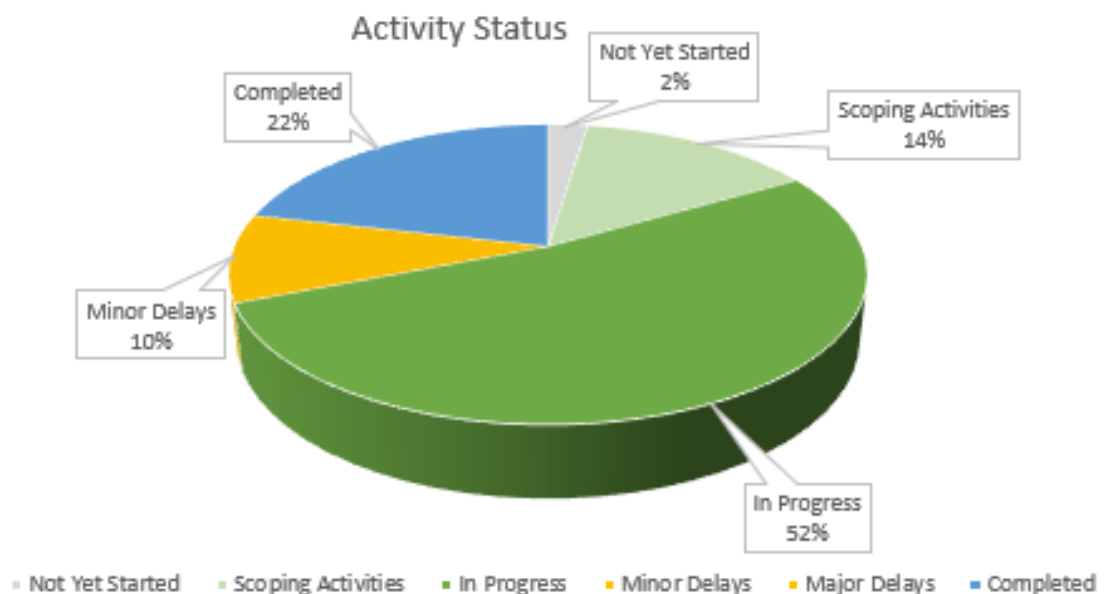
19. As of the 1st July, more than 270 staff members have taken part in the two-day trauma training, with just over 200 have completed the MTA (Day 3) practical training. Feedback from those who have attended the training has been positive and we remain on-track, to deliver all training by the expected completion date of April 2023.

20. HMICFRS require evidence of progress against the Cause of Concern and dialogue with HMICFRS on our progress has been regular and ongoing. Our Service Liaison Officer (SLO) ensures that they are kept fully updated on all activities and communications across the Service. The HMICFRS Service Liaison Lead (SLL) also has an open invite to the project meetings, providing them with access to all the relevant project documentation and the ability to ask any questions directly to the project team.

21. The feedback to-date from HMICFRS regarding the action we have taken has been positive and, whilst there has been no formal confirmation, we are anticipating that the Cause of Concern will be removed (resolved) in the coming weeks.

NEXT STEPS

22. Progress against the 71 activities set out in the internal improvement action plan is ongoing, with the chart below detailing the current status of the overall plan:



23. Our internal activities also include our own approach to 'Reality Testing', which builds on the approach taken by HMICFRS during the inspection. The GMFRS HMICFRS Team have developed a programme of visits across the Service that assesses key areas set out in the inspection report, our response to these, including how well new processes and procedures have been embedded.
24. To-date the internal HMICFRS Team have completed over 20 sessions of 'Reality Testing'. These have been undertaken with operational crews from firefighters to Group Managers, staff and specialists, and non-operational staff. Feedback from these sessions is being cross mapped against station and directorate reports, giving qualitative and quantitative data.
25. The findings are currently being collated and will be formulated into a report with key recommendations for consideration for each directorate. Individual meetings have also commenced with departmental heads to discuss initial findings.
26. Whilst we have not yet received any formal confirmation from HMICFRS, it is anticipated that our next full inspection will take place early 2023.