



**HAMPSHIRE  
FIRE AND  
RESCUE  
SERVICE**

# **Hampshire and Isle of Wight**

## **Fire & Rescue Services**

**HMICFRS Inspection 2018/19**

**ACTION PLAN**

Hampshire Fire and Rescue Service and the Isle of Wight Fire and Rescue Service welcome the reports from Her Majesty's Inspector of Fire and Rescue Services and the issues that they raise for our two services. With a joint management team and strong partnership working already in place for IOWFRS and HFRS it is appropriate that we consider both reports together rather than in isolation. Many of the actions required will be identical or similar across the two services and our many shared teams will be responsible for putting in place the improvements in both services.

Additionally, given the post-inspection decision by both Hampshire Fire and Rescue Authority and Isle of Wight Council on the 24<sup>th</sup> January 2019 to form a Combined Fire Authority for Hampshire, Isle of Wight, Portsmouth and Southampton, we have considered how best to form our response to HMICFRS.

It seems both logical and appropriate therefore to respond with a single document detailing the common areas, as well as the service specific points we will be working on. IOWFRS and HFRS will therefore be publishing a single joint HMICFRS action plan which, in time, will inform the next iteration of the services Integrated Risk Management Plans due for publication in April 2020.

In responding to the HMICFRS Inspection reports we have considered every element of the inspection and subsequent reports. This Action Plan focusses on the 'Cause for Concern' as well as the 'Areas for Improvement' giving our analysis and what we intend to do about the issues raised.

It is our intention to provide the best fire and rescue services to our communities and so we will also be working on those areas where we were assessed as 'Good', to assess how we can achieve an 'Outstanding' assessment in the future. We believe that focussing on all round improvement, rather than just a few weaker areas, will produce much more effective and sustainable improvements to our services.

Our approach:

The HMICFRS Inspection report covers numerous areas under the headings of Effectiveness, Efficiency and People. We have analysed the comments and any evidence and identified what we are already doing or are planning to do to improve in those areas. Where there is an existing plan, we have considered whether it adequately covers the comments from the report. If it does not, then a gap analysis has been completed to show us what else we might need to do in these areas. To ensure that we give the highlighted issues the widest possible consideration we will work with other services, especially those that were rated as 'Good' or 'Excellent', to learn from those that are seen as performing well. We will continue to work with HMICFRS to better understand their comments and their evidence, as we believe that a deeper understanding of the rationale will help us develop a better-informed response.

In developing and implementing an action plan, we will consult widely with our key stakeholders Hampshire Fire and Rescue Authority and Isle of Wight Council. Additionally, we recognise that our staff are our most important assets and their input via trade unions and staff forums will form an essential part of our progress.

Both IOWFRS and HFRS have long had the mission of making our communities safer and providing the best possible service, and we look forward to working with HMICFRS and other partners to achieve improvement across all areas of our activity.

## HAMPSHIRE FIRE & RESCUE SERVICE:

### Overview

#### Diagnostic Areas:

- Effectiveness
  - Rating: Good
  - Improvement required on how the Service protects the public with fire regulation
- Efficiency
  - Rating: Good
- People
  - Rating: Requires Improvement
  - Improvement required in the way the Service looks after its people, specifically in ensuring fairness and promoting diversity, promoting right values and culture, and managing performance and developing leaders

#### Effectiveness:

##### Areas for improvement

- The service should ensure it gathers and records relevant and up-to-date risk information.

#### Our analysis:

HFRS has a comprehensive policy on premises risk inspection and Site Specific Risk Information (SSRI) and follows the national Premises Operational Risk Information System model. All main appliances have a Mobile Data Terminal which have automatic wireless updating at every station. We use SSRI's and operational pre/support plans for high risk locations, as well as Fire & Rescue Services Act Section 7(2)d visits by operational crews. At high risk premises crews also have the use of Gerda boxes containing plans and information relating to the building. HFRS also use a paper and electronic device based Firefacts system and tactical operational guidance. The issue here appears to be about clarity of who is responsible for all of this information, and about a perceived disparity between the amounts of visits and information held in wholetime station areas as opposed to on-call station areas.

#### What we are going to do about it:

We will review our current policies and clarify who is responsible for improving the collation of risk information, the management of systems and the quality assurance of information to ensure HFRS understands where accountability lies. We will confirm with crews where responsibilities lie in collecting and recording premises and risk information. The Resilience and Operational Assurance Team will underpin the quality assurance process element of this area. We will also examine the limitations and barriers within on-call areas of the service where higher risks exist. We will focus particularly where higher risk premises exist and seek best practice from other services who face this issue.

We will provide confirmation through testing that risk information is readily available to frontline crews and is up to date for higher risk premises; and we will remove unnecessary information for low risk premises which we do not need to hold. The Premises Risk Management Group (PRMG) will take the lead in resolving the issues identified. PRMG will report into Area Manager Assurance and the Performance and Assurance Board.

**Strategic Lead – Director of Performance and Assurance**

**Target Date for completion: End of November 2019**

#### **Areas for improvement**

- The service should understand why it completes proportionately fewer home fire safety checks than other services.

#### **Our analysis:**

The inspection report is correct in that we do carry proportionately fewer checks, although we carry out the more comprehensive Safe & Well visits rather than the simpler Home Safety visits. In the 12 months to 31 March 2017, the number of home safety checks per 1,000 population was low when compared to many other services. This is due to the Service approach to prioritisation of higher risk, more vulnerable people and better targeting of resources using the more holistic Safe & Well approach. The intended outcome of Safe & Well visits is a Safer Hampshire and we have a low number of primary property fires, fire deaths and injuries per 100,000 of the population. This is below the national average and is in part due to our targeted prevention activities. However, we accept that we can do more home safety checks.

#### **What we are going to do about it:**

Safe & Well visits will continue to be delivered to those at most risk in their home. By working with our partners and referring to other agencies, we will continue to reduce the risk of fire and improve the wellbeing of vulnerable people in their homes, helping them to carry on living independently. Visits will target people over 65 and other vulnerable groups. This will include those who are vulnerable due to;

- Illness
- Physical Disability
- Learning Disability
- Mental Health
- Sensory Impairment
- Substance Misuse

The above is not an exhaustive list and will be compounded by the inability of the person or persons to protect themselves from harm.

Partnerships will be developed by stations, groups and service wide, to increase the number of quality referrals from those organisations working with the most vulnerable people. When the number of partnership referrals will not achieve our Safe & Well expectation, Exeter data will be used in a priority manner.

There will be a significant increase in the number of Safe & Well visits delivered, particularly through operational crews.

Wholetime stations: The expectation will be to deliver a minimum of **714** Safe & Well visits per each wholetime appliance (including SFV, FRV). This equates to 2 visits per appliance in each 24hr period (minus bank holidays). This number does not include the additional visits carried out by Community Safety Officers (CSO), volunteers, or other organisations.

RDS sections: RDS sections (including those on WDS stations) will deliver **50** per year. This equates to 1 visit per week (minus Christmas and Easter weeks). This number does not include the additional visits carried out by CSO's, volunteers, or other organisations.

Community Safety Hubs: Delivery of the highest risk visits, or those people that need multiple interactions, are to be carried out by the appropriately trained person as identified by the local Community Safety Delivery Manager (i.e. CSO).

We will understand the needs of local communities and respect difference, working with partners to engage with hard to reach groups, and continue to reduce the number of primary fires and fire related deaths and injuries.

**Strategic Lead – Director of Operations**

**Target date for completion: End of March 2020**

**Areas for improvement**

- The service should ensure it targets its prevention work at people most at risk.

**Our analysis:**

We are doing proportionately fewer Safe & Well visits in comparison with some other fire and rescue services. This is because our visits are targeted as reported above. Our high referral percentage rate to GP's is a strong correlation to confirming effective targeted activity. We believe that our approach is more comprehensive than a Home Safety Visit and other styles of Safe & Well visits, although this is not recognised in the report. During our feedback we were commended in the "fire injuries" KLOE as a positive outlier, and we believe this is a good indicator of successful targeted activities.

**What we are going to do about it:**

We will review our community safety policies to ensure we continue to target the most vulnerable members of our communities and further reduce risk. HFRS will work with partners to ensure a standard referral method is adopted across health and social care, improving and streamlining the referral pathway.

HFRS has conducted research with the local safeguarding boards to review fire deaths over the past 3 years. This highlights that over 60% of these people were known by other agencies and the type of behaviours and environments that increase the risk of fire. A Fire Safety Development Group, a sub group to the main Safeguarding Boards, will be established to ensure better management and referral of fire safety risk from local authorities and care providers.

Filtered Exeter data is available to target over 65's. Age itself however is not an indication of vulnerability. Risk factors should be used to define vulnerability. HFRS online referral form captures this information, with those that do not qualify for a visit being directed to complete a 'Safe and Sound' assessment on-line.

HFRS have researched the main cause of Accidental Dwelling Fires and injuries. The primary cause is cooking (66%) with the 3 main risk groups being elderly, rented accommodation (including students), and social renters. These will be targeted with bespoke messaging.

### **Strategic Lead – Director of Operations**

**Target date for completion: End of March 2020**

#### **Areas for improvement**

The service should evaluate its prevention work, so it understands the benefits better.

#### **Our analysis:**

We have recognised that we need to be better at evaluation of our activities and this is built into the new operating model of Plan, Do, Review. We are currently embedding this into the service and placing much greater emphasis on review and evaluation. This includes appointing an Assistant Chief Fire Officer with direct responsibility for this area. Previously HFRS made representation to be part of the national Safe & Well evaluation project. Although we were not selected to pilot this, we are following its work closely and decided not to progress our own approach locally, but to await the national standard.

Our very successful and long running Princes Trust programmes are externally evaluated, and performance is subject to OFSTED inspection.

HFRS actively promotes the Fire as a Health Asset agenda, as well as Road Safety and the Chief Fire Officer has recently taken up the national role of Chairman of the NFCC Strategic Health and Prevention Committee.

#### **What we are going to do about it:**

We have set stretching targets for the number of Safe & Well visits our staff will complete and we will evaluate what impact that change has had.

We will also carry out evaluation of Safe & Well visits in 2019/20 to ensure they are effective at reducing risk in all their areas of focus.

**Strategic Lead – Director of Operations**

**Target date for completion: End of March 2020**

**Areas for improvement**

- The service should ensure it allocates enough resources to a prioritised and risk-based inspection programme.

**Our analysis:**

The reduction in our funding has resulted in fewer staff and this reduction in staffing has resulted in fewer inspections being completed. However, we do still carry out a risk-based inspection programme for regulated buildings. The report recognises that our Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP) describes the reduction in risk within commercial buildings and that our plan prioritises how we match resources to risk. During our feedback we were commended in the “fire injuries” KLOE as a positive outlier. Fire deaths and injuries in regulated buildings are extremely low but we recognise that the risk is still present, and we cannot plan just for demand in this area. During the period in question we had responded to the impacts of the Grenfell fire and had visited every high rise building in Hampshire at least twice. This was an unexpected demand on our resources and undoubtedly had an impact on the amount of other work we could complete. We have teams dedicated to respond to alleged fire risks from the public (reactive) and separate teams for planning applications and for Risk Based Inspection Programme, who undertake routine visits on a proactive basis. We believe the premises identified as being out of date may have been over-rated in terms of risk and therefore may not require being inspected as regularly.

**What we are going to do about it:**

A new policy for better identification of risk will be implemented. A revised Protection Risk based Audit policy will be written to match this strategy. We will ensure that the premises are accurately risk assessed and that our inspection regime is matched to actual risk, and that resources are available to meet the demand.

An action plan to improve performance and reviewing its risk-based inspection programme will be produced.

**Strategic Lead – Director of Operations**

**Target date for completion: End of September 2019**

### **Areas for improvement**

- The service should assure itself that its commitment to the trading arm does not conflict with its main protection responsibilities or its public service duties.

### **Our analysis:**

Hampshire Fire and Rescue Authority has set up a business that operates from its Service Headquarters.

We recover full costs from the trading arm for facilities, and for the number of days of seconded staff capacity that they utilise.

HFRA has sought counsel advice and a policy position is to be considered imminently.

Since this inspection was carried out, a best practice document for Fire Service trading arms has been published by Grant Thornton for the NFCC and the Fire Industries Association, and our trading company both supports and fully complies with this guidance. Income generation, along with efficiencies, have enabled HFRS to maintain a safe service across all our areas of activity in Hampshire while reducing its budget by £12.2million over the last four years. Without the ability to generate income further, budget cuts would be necessary.

### **What we are going to do about it:**

We believe that any conflict that exists with our public service duties is being managed within the law. We also consider that income generation assists us in delivering these duties. We will provide further clarity for our staff and community about our financial strategy in our next IRMP.

### **Strategic Lead – Director of Risk and Planning**

**Target date for completion: End of June 2019**

### **Areas for improvement**

- The service should ensure it has an effective system for staff to use learning and debriefs to improve operational response and incident command.

### **Our analysis:**

Learning from operational incidents is a priority issue for all fire and rescue services with work taking place at national level to improve it. HFRS was one of 7 volunteer fire services in the National Operational Learning (NOL) pilot and are active participants in the NOL process. The National Command and Control User Group has just agreed recommendations for debriefing 'best practice' and HFRS was involved in developing this piece of work.



Overall HFRS is 'Good' at responding to emergencies and 'Good' at commanding incidents. We have procedures for debriefs at every level of incident however we understand that the primary focus has been on larger incidents. Although we believe that debrief from small, more common incidents may not necessarily produce any organisation wide learning, we accept that we can do better in this area.

**What we are going to do about it:**

We will review our policy in line with national developments and clarify with operational staff how they contribute to organisational learning through debriefs at all levels.

Head of Assurance to report to the Performance and Assurance Board (PAB) on the progress made to improve the debrief process which includes lower level incidents.

**Strategic Lead – Director of Performance and Assurance**

**Target date for completion: End of November 2019**

**Efficiency:**

**No Areas for improvement were identified in this area**

**People:**

**Areas for improvement**

- The service should ensure its expected values and behaviours are understood and demonstrated at all levels of the organisation and that managers actively promote these standards.

**Our analysis:**

HFRS has been actively and deliberately attempting to change its culture and the way we do things. This has been a priority for the new Chief Officer Group appointed in January 2018. Although we can point to evidence of cultural change and many positives, it is clear that there are many factors which contribute to this comment from HMICFRS. Over the last few years we have been subject to considerable change, budget reductions and impacts on our staff. We recognise that change is unsettling, and many people are negatively affected by it. It is too early for us to think that we have achieved successful cultural change as this can only be considered as a long term and ongoing objective. The report recognises that we deliberately chose not to produce or publicise a set of top-down values or behaviours, and that instead we have chosen to let this develop organically.

The service has identified 3 key behaviours/values and work is ongoing to further develop these and embed them in the organisation. The Chief Fire Officer is taking the lead on this with the Head of HR and Workforce Development. The report makes no comment or acknowledgement of the extent of the HFRS leadership framework, HFRS cultural values or, as explained during the strategic briefing, the degree of change that will be felt by our staff as we develop towards a new approach from the new Chief Fire Officer and the strategic leadership team.

**What we are going to do about it:**

The Chief Fire Officer and Head of HR and Workforce Development will continue to lead on the development of values and behaviours and their inclusion in the refreshed cultural vision for the Service. Once we reach a set of statements that we believe will work for HFRS and our current context, then we will work with our teams to embed these and ensure that all staff model the behaviours. They will also be incorporated into our new performance and promotional processes to ensure everyone understands the expected values and that demonstration of the behaviours is recognised and actively promoted by managers.

**Strategic Lead – Head of HR and Workforce Development**

**Target date for completion: End of December 2019**

**Areas for improvement**

- The service should assure itself that staff understand and have confidence in the service's grievance and absence management policies.

**Our analysis:**

We understand that HR policies need to be regularly reviewed and that in times of significant change impacting on our staff, the level of such HR activity is likely to increase. The Grievance and Absence Management policies were reviewed and rewritten in line with ACAS guidance, with full representative body and staff involvement, by Shared Services less than 2 years previously. We believe therefore that the policies are suitable and fit for purpose, but that we need to improve staff understanding of the processes, and the support given to them. We have previously carried out specific training for managers in all of these HR policies to support them managing their staff but recognise that we have had a turnover of staff at supervisory manager level and that this training will need to be repeated.

We know that staff have expressed concern that the shared Occupational Health (OH) unit does not 'understand' fire and rescue service requirements and have worked hard with them to improve performance and satisfaction rates. A new manager for that team has recently taken up post and has worked with HFRS to develop an OH Improvement Plan.

**What we are going to do about it:**

A supervisory leadership course has already been designed and is being delivered by Workforce Development to meet our needs in terms of Grievance, Disciplinary, Performance Management and Sickness Absence Management. For middle managers, a 3-day course is being developed which will improve their confidence in the application of these policies. This is being piloted in March with an intention to roll out from May.

The HR webpages provide lots of information in respect of the various HR policies and are accessible to all employees and managers. There is also an HR helpdesk which staff and managers can call for advice and guidance. However, we will run a communications campaign to ensure staff are aware of the resources and support available to them.

An OH Improvement Plan has been signed off by the Health and Safety Committee and delivery of this will continue to be monitored through this Committee. The project focus will be on improving processes, creating a better understanding, and most importantly a change of culture with a view to professionalising the occupational health referral process on all sides.

Key project outputs are:

- Identify and remove all barriers and obstacles to returning to work and/or achieving required performance or capability
- Skills, knowledge and behaviour matrix and training plan for OH, HR and Line Managers to ensure all cases are being proactively managed and progressed at pace
- Defined OH clinical quality assurance methodology and practice
- Joined up ownership and responsibility for sickness absence, including refined policy/how to guide and defined case management process
- Improved quality of referrals and OH reports, including better guidance for managers when referring individuals to OH, and a triage and referral assessment process

**Strategic Lead – Head of HR and Learning and Development**

**Target date for completion: End of March 2020**

### **Cause for Concern**

Hampshire Fire & Rescue Service does not do enough to be an inclusive employer. We found signs of low morale in the workforce. People have little confidence that they will be treated fairly or that senior leaders have their best interests at heart.

### **Recommendations**

By 30 June 2019, the service should:

- embed a programme to ensure that inclusion, fairness, equalities and professional development are priorities for the service;
- ensure that its recruitment activities are open and accessible to all of Hampshire's communities;
- treat employees according to their needs so they feel valued;
- ensure that each person's potential can be developed so they can perform to their very best;
- ensure that the chief officer team leads the programme, actively promoting the values of the organisation; and
- ensure that everyone knows how they contribute to the values.

### **Our analysis:**

We recognise that we have been through a period of considerable change over recent years and that this has had an impact on some of our staff and their morale. Whilst some of this change is internally driven through Risk Review and budget reductions, much is driven externally with the pay freeze, changes to firefighter pensions and other areas of dispute. We know that these changes are outside of our control but still affect our staff, sometimes significantly. Since the appointment of the new Chief Officer team we have been changing our operating model as well as attempting to pursue cultural change. Our staff have been through an unprecedented period of instability and change. Our feedback to HMICFRS is that we believe this Cause of Concern is over stated due to a misunderstanding of our continued cultural journey, the aspirations of the new Chief Fire Officer and team; and a cultural lag between where we are now, and the issues that staff told HMICFRS.

We informed the inspection team during the strategic briefing of the uncertainty staff will naturally feel as we move from existing to new ways of working. That does not mean however that we believe we do not have any issues. We are very conscious of the views of our workforce and have actively sought after them with successive cultural surveys. We know in particular that the use of fixed-term contracts and long-term temporary promotions has had a negative impact, even though they have been successful in their objective of avoiding compulsory redundancies. We also know that our promotion processes have changed several times and staff are confused and have reduced confidence in their fairness and transparency.

The Service published a People Strategy in 2016 which sets out our statement of intent for the future vision of the Service's workforce. The strategy outlines our approach to workforce planning, culture and leadership, inclusion, performance, learning and development and wellbeing. Delivery of the strategy is through the annual service planning process which identifies key priorities and includes specific objectives in respect of people and inclusion. These are agreed and monitored by HFRA.

The Inclusion and Diversity Plan was signed off by the senior team and was provided to the Service Liaison Lead. Our successful support groups, FireInspire (gender), FireReach (Religion, ethnicity and cultural heritage), FireAble (disability) and FireOut (LGBT+) each have an Executive Group member as sponsor. For example, the Deputy Chief Fire Officer is the gender champion and takes an active role in promoting gender equality. One of the purposes of the diversity support groups is to improve understanding of the needs of different employee groups and ensure they have a voice when developing policy.

We acknowledge the gender disparity in our workforce and are committed to addressing this. We have produced and published a strong positive action statement letting our staff and the public know that we are actively encouraging people from under-represented groups to apply to work for us.

A very proactive, positive action and diverse attraction campaign has been deployed for the 2019 Wholetime firefighter recruitment campaign. At the time of writing we have made some initial analysis of the 795 applications we have received. Figures show 12% female applicants (an improvement of 50% from our last recruitment). 11% who are other than White-British, 16% who do not identify as heterosexual and 4% with a disability. Whilst these figures are encouraging, we know there is much still to be done.

Our On-Call recruitment campaign (for which we have led nationally) targets females and applicants from other under-represented groups.

Our commitment to our employee's wellbeing is outlined in our People Strategy and we have invested significantly in supporting positive mental health of our employees. We have an extensive network of trained mental health first aiders and a wellbeing tactical group chaired by our HR Business Partner.

**What we are going to do about it:**

Our operating model is supported by new Executive Boards one of which is the People and Organisational Development (POD) Board. This is chaired by the Head of HR and Workforce Development who will be developing a new POD strategy. The strategy will describe the new strategic intent in respect of our workforce, and address concerns raised by both HMIC and our staff through the cultural survey.

In March, we will be holding an inclusive leadership development day for all middle managers. The intention of the day is to ensure our managers understand the importance of inclusion in getting the best from our workforce and will also cover issues such as unconscious bias. This day will be supported by senior managers, and the Deputy Chief Fire Officer will be actively promoting the day by opening the session.

We will continue to implement the Inclusion and Diversity (I&D) Plan and will refresh the Diversity Champions role, with each of the four network groups having an identified Executive Group 'champion' and the Chief Fire Officer formally taking on the role of overall Diversity Champion for the service and our staff.

We will complete and implement the I&D Inclusion initiative 'A Bit More' (Belonging, Integrity, Trust) training plan for all staff and teams.

We will be benchmarking to National Inclusion Standard by the end of May, working with Inclusive Employers. This feedback will be incorporated into the I&D action plan.

We will continue the social media targeting of female and other under-represented candidates and communities.

Our current and future wholetime recruitment campaigns will continue to provide positive action and support for applicants from under-represented groups throughout each stage of the process. For example, we will run female only selection testing, as evidence shows that female applicants perform better in these groups.

**Strategic Lead – Chief Fire Officer supported by Head of HR and Workforce Development**

**Target date for completion: We will have a refreshed plan in place by the end of June 2019 and aim for completion of these actions by the End of March 2020**

**Areas for improvement**

- The service should assure itself that staff are confident using its feedback mechanisms, so these help the service gather valuable information. It should put in place an action plan to address the concerns raised by staff in the recent staff surveys.

**Our analysis:**

We have been involved in developing a specific and targeted cultural survey working with academics from Harvard and Cornell Universities in America; and have been actively encouraging our staff to take part in these. A response rate of 42% up from 24% initially is seen as a positive indicator that our staff are willing to engage. We believe that our decision to undertake a second cultural survey during the run up to the inspection period demonstrates our clear commitment. We believe there were many examples of good staff communications included during the inspection which have had limited coverage within the report, for example approaches to shift design, appliance design and crewing levels.

We know that we are actively pursuing cultural change and some of the issues raised will have already been addressed by the ongoing changes we have made. It is important for us to understand the comments made and their context, understand how much of it is historical or is still relevant, and to make clear decisions on what changes we will make and how we will make them.

There is no current published action plan for ongoing cultural surveys, but we will develop this once the analysis of the last survey is complete. We need to develop communications on progress towards the concerns raised.

**What we are going to do about it:**

We will ensure that the results of the last cultural survey are fully analysed and continue our involvement with the Harvard / Cornell team for this. We will ensure that the completion of service changes are fully evaluated and impacts analysed so that ongoing change is managed carefully.

The combination of findings from 2016/18 surveys have already led to a number of changes, such as the centralisation of promotional processes to address concerns over fairness and transparency.

We have also made changes and improvements in the areas of development vs competent pay, removed all of the 'A' pay scales, involved firefighters with vehicle design, the selection of PPE and initiated a significant Station Investment Programme which will improve facilities across the board.

The new POD Board intends to address concerns around internal communication and feedback loops, with an objective of increasing employee engagement. One current consideration is the establishment of 'Voice' which will be an employee representation group.

The Head of HR and Workforce Development will be meeting regularly with the internal comms team to ensure there is a comprehensive and effective staff communication plan on actions arising out of the cultural survey and in relation to the new POD strategy.

**Strategic Lead – Head of HR and Learning and Development**

**Target date for completion: End of March 2020**

#### **Areas for improvement**

- The service should ensure it has an effective system in place to manage staff development, performance, promotion and productivity.

#### **Our analysis:**

The previous goal of placing the selection accountability with the recruiting line manager created perceived inconsistencies and we have listened to our staff and acted on this as an outcome of the cultural surveys (2016 & 2018). We have now developed new centralised promotion processes which are open and transparent, and which have been successfully used to promote CM, WM, GM and AM. This change has been positively received.

We recognise that the previous Personal Development Review (PDR) process with a focus on team performance was not meeting the requirements of the Service or ensuring our staff had effective performance development discussions with their managers. Workforce Development and the Academy have collaborated to design a new Performance Development Plan (PDP) process which replaces both PDR and grey book development plans. The new PDP process is intended to drive high performance by encouraging continuous learning and development, rather than the peaks and troughs in performance shortly before and after promotional processes. The PDP is currently being piloted and will be rolled out from April onwards.

#### **What we are going to do about it:**

We will continue to review our appointment and promotional processes via the Resource Management Group which is chaired by the Head of HR and Workforce Development. This will ensure continued fairness and transparency of these processes.

The new PDP will replace PDR and development plans for all staff from April 2019 onwards. When the new set of statements in respect of values and behaviours are agreed, these will be incorporated into the PDP to ensure performance discussions consider both achievement of objectives and the way in which they are achieved.

**Strategic Lead – Head of HR and Learning and Development**

**Target date for completion: End of March 2020**

### **Areas for improvement**

- The service should put in place an open and fair process to identify, develop and support high-potential staff and aspiring leaders.

### **Our analysis:**

This issue is an extension of the one above with our clear recognition that we have leaders across our organisation and that development is not just about promotion. To support the leadership development of our workforce we have an extensive array of training and development opportunities available through Workforce Development, but we recognise that we need to do more, particularly for green book staff.

For employees who are new or aspiring leaders, we have a development programme called Firefly which provides an introduction into leadership concepts, including personal leadership style and impact. The Firefly programme receives excellent feedback from those who have completed the programme and is often over-subscribed as a result.

Senior managers have an open process to apply for consideration for the Executive Leadership Programme, and Executive Group colleagues have access to Institute of Directors accredited training.

We are committed to creating a coaching culture across our organisation and have rolled out training on coaching conversations to many of our managers. Employees can also access professional coaching through Workforce Development.

### **What we are going to do about it:**

For middle managers, we are launching a new programme of Leadership CPD events. These will run 4 times per year and will focus on developing the leadership capabilities of these managers. The first of these events will focus on inclusive leadership.

We will publicise the existing workforce development offering more explicitly. This will cover both the courses and training opportunities, but also the access to coaching.

We will encourage managers to identify their staff with potential and target them to the FireFly programme.

A new Performance Development Plan process will be in place to replace the old PDP and PDR system for April 2019.

### **Strategic Lead – Head of HR and Learning and Development**

**Target date for completion: End of September 2019**



### **Areas for improvement**

- The service should ensure its selection, development and promotion of staff is open, transparent and fair, including its position on the use and length of temporary promotions.

### **Our analysis:**

Our Resource Management Group, led by our Head of HR and Workforce Development, bring consistency and accountability to all appointment and promotion processes. This group, which includes representative bodies, has listened to concerns from our staff in respect of the fairness of these processes. As a result, they have reviewed the intention of placing selection accountability with the recruiting line manager and recognised that it could result in inconsistencies. We have now developed centralised promotion processes which are open and transparent, and which have been successfully used at CM, WM, GM, and AM level. These have been positively received by staff.

Our Resource Management Group also monitors and oversees all workforce planning and resourcing activity, including management of establishment against service planning requirements.

The group regularly reviews use of temporary promotions, secondments and fixed term contracts and seeks to reduce use of these over the next 12 months to create stability and certainty for our staff.

### **What we are going to do about it:**

We have reviewed and amended our promotion processes and centralised more aspects of them. Although this will give greater control and consistency, we recognise that staff may feel some uncertainty as we move towards a more centralised process as a result of their feedback.

The revised process has now been used at CM, WM, GM, and AM level and have generally been viewed positively by staff, with SM ongoing at the time of writing. We will review these changes once the remaining elements have been concluded in order to ensure they have met our objectives.

The Resource Management Group will continue to monitor temporary promotions and fixed term contracts and we have stated to all our staff that we will be reducing the number of these over the next 12 months. We believe that these are a useful tool to manage the establishment and can provide development opportunities for staff, so expect that we will always have some, but at the lowest possible level.

**Strategic Lead – Head of HR and Learning and Development**

**Target date for completion: End of March 2020**

## ISLE OF WIGHT FIRE & RESCUE SERVICE:

### Overview

Diagnostic Areas:

- Effectiveness
  - Rating: Good
  - Improvement required on how the Service protects the public with fire regulation
- Efficiency
  - Rating: Good
- People
  - Rating: Requires Improvement
  - Improvement required in the way the Service looks after its people, specifically in ensuring fairness and promoting diversity, promoting right values and culture, and managing performance and developing leaders

### Effectiveness:

#### Areas for improvement

- The service should ensure it gathers and records relevant and up-to-date risk information.

#### Areas for improvement

- The service should ensure its firefighters have good access to relevant and up-to-date risk information.

### Our analysis:

The Isle of Wight is a comparatively low risk area with low population density and statistics show it is a safe place to be. IOWFRS has a comprehensive policy on premises risk inspection and Site Specific Risk Information (SSRI) and follows the national Premises Operational Risk Information System model. All main appliances have a Mobile Data Terminal which is regularly updated. We use SSRI's and operational pre/support plans for high risk locations, as well as Fire & Rescue Services Act Section 7(2)d visits by operational crews. IOWFRS also use a paper and electronic device based Firefacts system and tactical operational guidance. The issue here appears to be about clarity of who is responsible for all of this information, and about a perceived disparity between the amounts of visits and information held in wholetime station areas as opposed to on-call station areas.

### What we are going to do about it:

We will review our current policies and clarify who is responsible for improving the collation of risk information, the management of systems and the quality assurance of information to ensure IOWFRS understands where accountability lies. With the impending combination with Hampshire Fire and Rescue Service under a single Fire Authority we will harmonise our policies across the two services.

We will confirm with crews where responsibilities lie in collecting and recording premises and risk information. The Performance and Assurance Team will underpin the quality assurance process element of this area. We will also examine the limitations and barriers within on-call areas of the service where higher risks exist. We will focus particularly where higher risk premises exist and seek best practice from other services who face this issue.

We intend to increase the number of firefighters available during the day time – this will increase the capacity to undertake this work and it will be a measured priority for Station Plans. The coordination and completion will be overseen by the Island Group Manager.

We will provide confirmation, through testing, that risk information is readily available to frontline crews and is up to date for higher risk premises; and we will remove unnecessary information for low risk premises which we do not need to hold. The Premises Risk Management Group (PRMG) will take the lead in resolving the issues identified. PRMG will report into Area Manager Assurance and the Performance and Assurance Board.

**Strategic Lead – Director of Operations**

**Target Date for completion: End of June 2019**

**Areas for improvement**

The service should evaluate its prevention work, so it understands the benefits better.

**Our analysis:**

We have recognised that we need to be better at evaluation of our activities and this is built into the Hampshire operating model of Plan, Do, Review which will now be applied to IOWFRS. We are currently embedding this into the service, placing much greater emphasis on review and evaluation. This includes appointing an Assistant Chief Fire Officer with direct responsibility for this area.

IOWFRS actively promotes the Fire as a Health Asset agenda, as well as being responsible for Road Safety education on the Island, and the Chief Fire Officer has recently taken up the national role of Chairman of the NFCC Strategic Health and Prevention Committee.

**What we are going to do about it:**

With the impending combination with Hampshire Fire and Rescue Service under a single Fire Authority, we will harmonise our policies across the two services. When the combination is complete, ownership of prevention and protection work will transfer to a single team. Line management and work plans will be coordinated centrally bringing greater resources, expertise and resilience.

We will continue to report to the Community Safety Partnership and work with partners in the Road Safety Forum to ensure our work is evaluated and is effective. The Senior Officer on the Island will monitor the progress made.

**Strategic Lead – Director of Operations / Local Senior Officer IoW**

**Target date for completion: End of March 2020**

### **Areas for improvement**

- The service should ensure it allocates enough resources to a prioritised and risk-based inspection programme.

### **Our analysis:**

The reduction in our funding has resulted in fewer staff and this reduction in staffing has resulted in fewer inspections being completed. However, we do still carry out a risk-based inspection programme for regulated buildings. The report recognises that our Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP) describes the reduction in risk within commercial buildings and that our plan prioritises how we match resources to risk. During our feedback we were commended in the “fire injuries” KLOE as a positive outlier. Fire deaths and injuries in regulated buildings are extremely low, but we recognise that the risk is still present, and we cannot plan just for demand in this area. During the period in question we had responded to the impacts of the Grenfell fire and had visited various cladded buildings at least twice to assess risk. This was an unexpected demand on our resources and undoubtedly had an impact on the amount of other work we could complete. We have teams dedicated to respond to alleged fire risks from the public (reactive) and separate teams for planning applications and for Risk Based Inspection Programme, who undertake routine visits on a proactive basis.

### **What we are going to do about it:**

With the impending combination with Hampshire Fire and Rescue Service under a single Fire Authority we will harmonise our policies across the two services. When the planned combination goes ahead then ownership of prevention and protection work will transfer to a single joint team. Line management and work plans will be coordinated centrally bringing greater resources, expertise and resilience.

We will ensure that the premises are accurately risk assessed and that our inspection regime is matched to actual risk, and that resources are available to meet the demand. We will produce an action plan to improve performance. This will be reviewed and by the Senior Officer on the Island.

**Strategic Lead – Director of Operations / Local Senior Officer IoW**

**Target date for completion: End of September 2019**

### **Areas for improvement**

- The service should ensure immediately it has an effective system for staff to use learning and debriefs to improve operational response and incident command.

### **Our analysis:**

Learning from operational incidents is a priority issue for all fire and rescue services with work taking place at national level to improve it.

The National Command and Control User Group has just agreed recommendations for debriefing ‘best practice’ and IOWFRS was involved in developing this piece of work.

Overall IOWFRS is ‘Good’ at responding to emergencies and ‘Good’ at commanding incidents. We have procedures for debriefs at every level of incident, however we understand that the primary focus has been on larger incidents. Although we believe that debrief from small, more common incidents may not produce any organisational wide learning, we accept that we can do better in this area.

Since the inspection, a system of Operational Assurance and incident debriefing has been implemented and is working for IOWFRS. The inspection team recognised the service has an established culture of learning and we will build on this to continue to improve.

**What we are going to do about it:**

With the impending combination with Hampshire Fire and Rescue Service under a single Fire Authority we will harmonise our policies across the two services. When the planned combination goes ahead, ownership of organisational learning will transfer to a single joint team. Line management and processes will be coordinated centrally bringing greater resources, expertise and resilience.

We will review our policy in line with national developments and clarify with operational staff how they contribute to organisational learning through debriefs at all levels.

The Head of Assurance will report to the Senior Officer on the Island on the progress made to improve the debrief process, including lower level incidents.

**Strategic Lead – Director of Performance and Assurance**

**Target date for completion: End of September 2019**

**Areas for improvement**

- The service should ensure it has the capacity to vary the level of its response to incidents based on risk.

**Our analysis:**

The IOWFRS currently uses pre-determined attendance models in line with the Network Fire Control Partnership. The Service recognises the geographical issues for the Island and the need for a more locally tailored approach to incidents and the efficiency which can be gained from this. Although risk on the Isle of Wight is very low, the ‘Island factor’ means that additional resources take longer to arrive than they would on the mainland, and therefore the Isle of Wight Fire and Rescue has a greater need to be self-sufficient for longer periods than is the norm.

The recent Service Review confirmed a significant difference in the levels of incidents and therefore response activity across a 24hr period. It was also recognised that introducing more flexible working arrangements could improve efficiency. The Service Review has made a number of recommendations which are now being considered for implementation.

### What are we going to do about it:

The findings and recommendations of the Service Review will be implemented through 2019 and will lead to more flexible allocation of response resources, better matched to the demands in activity, and more flexible use of staff. Times of greatest need will enable us to provide a tailored response and greater community safety capacity across the Island. With the move to closer working with Hampshire Fire and Rescue Service, we will review our attendance standards to ensure we are delivering the most effective service with the resources we have available.

**Strategic Lead – Director of Operations / Local Senior Officer IoW**

**Target date for completion: End of March 2020**

### People:

#### Areas for improvement

- The service should ensure staff have access to trauma support and counselling services.

#### Areas for improvement

- The service should assure itself that staff are confident in raising welfare concerns.

### Our analysis:

The IOWFRS is part of Isle of Wight Council (IWC) and all employees are able to access the support services offered through the Council. These are comprehensive and include:

- Mental Health Checklist – which signposts a number of support services available
- Mental Health first aiders – throughout the Council
- Occupational Health (which can also include critical incident/trauma counselling and/or face to face counselling)
- Employee Assistance Programme
- The Isle of Wight Council has signed the mental health pledge
- HSE Wellbeing Assessment Tool (initiated via management)
- Stress Risk Assessment (undertaken where needed)
- Mental Health Working Group
- REMPLOY
- Resilience training course (via L&D)
- Mindfulness training sessions (via L&D)
- Suicide awareness (via L&D)

We believe the issue here is one of communication and of our staff not knowing about the services that are available or how to access them. We know that combination with HFRS will mean that we will have to move from the IWC offering to a joint service between HFRS and IOWFRS, which will mean some services change, or are offered through different providers.

**What we are going to do about it:**

We will review our mental health provision as we move to the Combined Fire Authority and ensure that all of our staff are aware of the current provisions and changes to that provision as they occur. A comprehensive communication strategy will be in place for every aspect of that change, and we will ensure that we improve awareness of mental health issues and our provision for it. We have appointed a Watch Manager onto a 6-month project to implement the Trauma Risk Management process (TRiM) onto the Island and to improve awareness of all of the available welfare and support arrangements.

**Strategic Lead – Head of HR and Organisational Development**

**Target date for completion: End of September 2019**

**Cause for Concern**

Isle of Wight Fire & Rescue Service does not do enough to be an inclusive employer. We found signs of low morale in the workforce. People have little confidence that they will be treated fairly or that senior leaders have their best interests at heart.

**Recommendations**

By 30 June 2019, the service should:

- embed a programme to ensure that inclusion, fairness, equalities and professional development are priorities for the service;
- ensure that its recruitment activities are open and accessible to all of Isle of Wight communities;
- treat employees according to their needs so they feel valued;
- ensure that each person's potential can be developed so they can perform to their very best;
- ensure that the chief officer team leads the programme, actively promoting the values of the organisation; and
- ensure that everyone knows how they contribute to the values.

**Our analysis:**

We recognise that we have been through a period of considerable change over recent years and that this has had an impact on some of our staff and their morale.

Whilst some of this change is internally driven through Service Review and budget reductions, much is driven externally with the pay freeze, changes to firefighter pensions and other areas of dispute. We know that these changes are outside of our control but still affect our staff, sometimes significantly. Since the appointment of the new Chief Officer Team we have been changing our operating model as well as attempting to pursue cultural change. Our staff have been through an unprecedented period of instability and change. Our feedback to HMICFRS is that we believe this Cause for Concern is a result of the sustained period of change and uncertainty that our staff have suffered, a cultural lag between where we are now and the issues that staff told HMICFRS, and the plans that the new Chief Fire Officer and team are putting in place.

We informed the inspection team during the strategic briefing of the uncertainty staff will naturally feel as we move from existing management and structures to new ways of working. That does not mean however that we believe we do not have any issues. We are very conscious of the views of our workforce and actively seek their involvement. We know in particular that the use of fixed-term contracts and long-term temporary promotions has had a negative impact, even though they have been successful in their objective of avoiding compulsory redundancies. We also know that our promotion processes have changed several times and staff are confused and have reduced confidence in their fairness and transparency.

HFRS published a People Strategy in 2016, which will now be applicable to IOWFRS, setting out our statement of intent for the future vision of the Service's workforce. The strategy outlines our approach to workforce planning, culture and leadership, inclusion, performance, learning and development and wellbeing. Delivery of the strategy is through the annual service planning process which identifies key priorities and includes specific objectives in respect of people and inclusion.

The Inclusion and Diversity Plan was signed off by the senior team and was provided to the Service Liaison Lead. By combining with Hampshire, the following support groups will be available; FireInspire (gender), FireReach (Religion, ethnicity and cultural heritage), FireAble (disability) and FireOut (LGBT+) whereby each have an Executive Group member as sponsor. For example, the Deputy Chief Fire Officer is the gender champion and takes an active role in promoting gender equality. One of the purposes of the diversity support groups is to improve understanding of the needs of different employee groups and ensure they have a voice when developing policy.

We acknowledge the gender disparity in our workforce and are committed to addressing this. We have produced and published a strong positive action statement advising our staff and the public that we are actively encouraging people from under-represented groups to apply to work for us.

Our On-Call recruitment campaign (for which we have led nationally) targets females and applicants from other under-represented groups.

**What we are going to do about it:**

With the impending combination with Hampshire Fire and Rescue Service under a single Fire Authority, we will harmonise our policies across the two services. When the planned combination goes ahead then ownership of people related issues will transfer to a single joint IOWFRS/HFRS team. Line management and processes will be coordinated centrally bringing greater resources, expertise and resilience.



Our operating model is supported by new Executive Boards, one of which is the People and Organisational Development (POD) Board. This is chaired by the Head of HR and Workforce Development who will be developing a new POD strategy. The strategy will describe the new strategic intent in respect of our workforce in both IOWFRS and HFRS and address concerns raised by HMICFRS.

We will implement the Hampshire Inclusion and Diversity (I&D) Plan and will refresh the Diversity Champions role, with each of the four network groups having an identified Executive Group 'champion' and the Chief Fire Officer formally taking on the role of overall Diversity Champion for both of the services and all of our staff.

We will continue the social media targeting of female and other under-represented candidates and communities.

**Strategic Lead – Chief Fire Officer supported by Local Senior officer**

**Target date for completion: We will have a refreshed plan in place by the end of June 2019 and aim for completion of these actions by the End of March 2020**

#### **Areas for improvement**

- The service should put in place an open and fair process to identify, develop and support high-potential staff and aspiring leaders.

#### **Our analysis:**

This issue is an extension of the one above with our clear recognition that we have leaders across our organisation and that development is not just about promotion. To support the leadership development of our workforce, we have an extensive array of training and development opportunities available through IWC and HFRS Workforce Development, but we recognise that we need to do more, particularly for Green Book staff.

With the impending combination with Hampshire Fire and Rescue Service under a single Fire Authority, we will harmonise our policies across the two services. When the planned combination goes ahead ownership of people related issues will transfer to a single joint IOWFRS/HFRS team. Line management and processes will be coordinated centrally bringing greater resources, expertise and resilience.

#### **What we are going to do about it:**

We will roll out the existing HFRS workforce development offering to IOWFRS staff. This will cover both the courses and training opportunities, but also the access to coaching.

We will encourage managers to identify staff with potential and target them to the appropriate development programmes.

We will remove old policies which inhibit the support and opportunities for aspiring leaders. We will maintain standards and professional qualifications whilst developing more flexible methods for developing future leaders.

**Strategic Lead – Local Senior Officer**

**Target date for completion: End of September 2019**

## Conclusions and summary

HFRS and IOWFRS are committed to providing the best possible service that we can, to deliver our objective of Making Life Safer. We are pleased to see the HMICFRS report confirm that we are effective at keeping people safe and that we are good at:

- Understanding the risk of fire and other emergencies
- Preventing fires and other risks
- Responding to fires and other emergencies
- Responding to national risks

We are proud that we provide two efficient services and make good use of our resources.

We know that we are ambitious and have been changing many things about the way we operate, and how we provide even better services. We appreciate that our staff have been through significant change and that this has had an impact on them. We will focus on the people elements of this report to better support our staff and make them feel valued and appreciated.

Cultural change does not happen overnight and, whilst we have target dates on these changes, we know that this will be a continuing piece of work that cannot simply be 'fixed' in the short term. Visible leadership from the Chief Officer Team will be important and we will continue to build the other networks across the organisation, such as the Watch Manager, Station Manager and Group Manager forums that will be key to having a fully engaged, involved and pro-active workforce.

Although we will focus on those areas where we have been assessed as 'Requiring Improvement', we will also look to build on those areas where we are rated as 'Good', in order to improve these to 'Outstanding'. We will seek to improve in every area and provide an even better service.