

EAST SUSSEX FIRE AUTHORITY

Date 9 December 2021

Title of Report HMICFRS Self-Assessment 2022

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Background Papers Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary, Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) – Result of the Mock Inspection undertaken March 2021 and an update on the Service's activity in relation to the next round of inspections- 27 May 2021

East Sussex Fire and Rescue position statement and self-assessment in preparation for the Service HMICFRS inspection- 22 January 2019

HMICFRS Public perception survey- 11 December 2019

HMICFRS Update Summary - 20 September 2018

HMICFRS inspection preparations - 22 March 2018

Appendices Appendix A ESFRS Self-Assessment

Implications (please tick ✓ and attach to report)

Any implications affecting this report should be noted within the final paragraphs of the report

CORPORATE RISK		LEGAL	✓
ENVIRONMENTAL		POLICY	
FINANCIAL		POLITICAL	
HEALTH & SAFETY		OTHER (please specify)	
HUMAN RESOURCES		CORE BRIEF	

PURPOSE OF REPORT To present the self-assessment completed as part of Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) inspection process 2022 for approval.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY This report presents the self-assessment document which is a key part of the fire and rescue service inspection process. The self-assessment has been compiled by the Senior Leadership Team to answer the questions provided by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS). The template is more focused than for previous inspections and Services are asked to comment only on developments since the last inspection.

The document attached as Appendix A is limited to 1,500 words and Services must answer the following questions:

- What key changes have there been for your FRS since the round 1 inspection – e.g., governance, funding, staffing?
- What action has the service taken in response to any areas for improvement identified during the last inspection (round 1)?
- What are your FRSs priorities for the coming year?
- What action is the service taking in response to the Covid-19 inspection report?
- Please include any other information that you feel would be useful to the inspectors to provide context for the operation of the FRS and its current performance.

RECOMMENDATION

That the Fire Authority approve the 2022 HMICFRS inspection self-assessment which will be submitted to HMICFRS as part of round two of the inspection process in January 2022.

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 East Sussex Fire & Rescue Service (ESFRS) was last inspected in June 2019 as part of the first round of Fire and Rescue Service inspection by HMICFRS and again in November 2020 as part of a Covid inspection. Round two of the full FRS inspection had been due to take place in 2020 but was postponed due to the pandemic. ESFRS is in the third tranche of inspections. The dates for the next inspection were released on 26 October. ESFRS is due to be inspected w/c 13 June 2022, for a period of 6 weeks.
- 1.2 The first part of the inspection process is the provision of a range of documents requested by HMICFRS and a self-assessment. These have to be provided to the Inspectorate between the w/c 24 January 2022 and the w/c 21 February 2022.
- 1.3 The self-assessment is a key initial phase of fire and rescue service inspection. The self-assessment template is more focused than for round one of the inspections in 2018, with Services asked to comment only on developments since the last inspection, limited to 1,500 words and only in relation to the following questions:
- What key changes have there been for your FRS since the round 1 inspection – e.g., governance, funding, staffing?
 - What action has the service taken in response to any areas for improvement identified during the last inspection (round 1)?
 - What are your FRSs priorities for the coming year?

- What action is the service taking in response to the Covid-19 inspection report?
- Please include any other information that you feel would be useful to the inspectors to provide context for the operation of the FRS and its current performance.

The self-assessment will be used to develop a presentation for the strategic briefing, which was due to take place in the first week of the inspection week commencing 13 June 2022.

1.4 Guidance from the HMICFRS service liaison lead is that the self-assessment should remain within the 1,500 word limit and be written to signpost the areas that can be expanded on in the strategic briefing, bullet points are acceptable to signpost the key areas of work that Services wish to highlight. The word count is 1,553, just over the 1,500 limit. It has been written so that each of the 17 areas for improvement are answered, albeit briefly and in numerical order.

1.5 The seventeen areas for improvement which have been answered in question 2 are as follows:

- AFI 1 - The service should ensure its firefighters have good access to relevant and up-to-date risk information.
- AFI 2 - The service should ensure it shares risk information consistently across the service.
- AFI 3 - The service should ensure it carries out home safety visits in a timely manner.
- AFI 4 - The service should evaluate its prevention work, so it understands the benefits better.
- AFI 5 - The service should ensure that its risk-based inspection programme targets its highest-risk premises.
- AFI 6 - The service should ensure it addresses effectively the burden of fire false alarms.
- AFI 7 - The service should ensure it has effective arrangements for providing specialist protection advice out of hours.
- AFI 8 – The service should improve the availability of its on call fire engines to respond to incidents.
- AFI 9 – The service should ensure firefighters have good access to relevant and up-to-date risk information (Responding).
- AFI 10 - The service should ensure firefighters have good access to relevant and up-to-date risk information including cross-border risks.

- AFI 11 - The service should ensure it is well-prepared to form part of a multi-agency response to a terrorist-related incident and that its procedures for responding are understood by all staff and are well tested.
- AFI 12 - The service needs to ensure that it allocates its resources appropriately and prioritises activities that address the risks identified in its integrated risk management plan.
- AFI 13 - The service should make sure its values and behaviours are understood and demonstrated by all staff.
- AFI 14 - The service should have effective means to monitor the working hours of its staff.
- AFI 15 - The service should develop a workforce plan that takes full account of the necessary skills and capabilities it needs to carry out its integrated risk management plan.
- AFI 16 - The service should ensure it takes timely action in response to feedback or concerns from its staff.
- AFI 17 - The service should ensure it has mechanisms in place to manage and develop talent within the organisation.

1.6 The self-assessment is attached at Appendix A and will be submitted to the HMICFRS in January.

1.7 Prior to the inspection, an HMICFRS staff survey will be shared with staff and the inspectorate also has a confidential reporting line which anyone can use to share information with them. A public survey is also part of the process.

1.8 The six-week inspection will consist of interviews with the Chairman of the Fire Authority, the Chief Fire Officer, key managers, and partners, plus desk-top reviews of processes and focus groups with a range of staff. There will be more focus in this inspection on equality, diversity, and inclusion and on studying the way in which the Service deals with all aspects of an incident from initial call, through response and any outcomes for prevention, protection, and other departments.

2. Legal Implications

2.1 In May 2016, the Home Secretary established a wide-ranging reform programme for the fire and rescue services in England. This included a proposal to establish a rigorous and independent inspection regime for fire and rescue authorities.

2.2 In July 2017, the Home Office confirmed that HMIC would take on the role of inspecting fire and rescue services in England, and of assessing and reporting on the effectiveness and efficiency of each service. To reflect these new responsibilities, HMIC's name changed to HMICFRS.

2.3 The Policing and Crime Act 2017, which amended the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004, contains provisions to strengthen existing powers to inspect fire and rescue authorities.

3. Financial

3.1 There are no financial implications resulting from this report.

4. Equality Impact Assessment

4.2 There are no equality and diversity implications arising from this report.