

Fire & Rescue Service Headquarters Summergroves Way Kingston upon Hull HU4 7BB
Telephone 01482 565333

To: Members of the Fire Authority	Enquiries to: Alison Finn Email: committeemanager@humbersidefire.gov.uk Tel. Direct: (01482) 393204 Date: 23 November 2023
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Dear Member

I hereby give you notice that a meeting of **HUMBERSIDE FIRE AUTHORITY** will be held on **FRIDAY, 1 DECEMBER 2023 at 10.30AM** at **HUMBERSIDE FIRE & RESCUE SERVICE HEADQUARTERS, SUMMERGROVES WAY, KINGSTON UPON HULL, HU4 7BB.**

The business to be transacted is set out below.

Yours sincerely

Alison Finn.

for Lisa Nicholson
Monitoring Officer & Secretary to Fire Authority

Enc.

A G E N D A

Business	Page Number	Lead	Primary Action Requested
1. Apologies for absence	-	Monitoring Officer & Secretary	To record
2. Declarations of Interest	-	Monitoring Officer & Secretary	To declare
3. Minutes of the Authority meeting held on 3 November 2023	(pages 1 - 5)	Chairperson	To approve
4. Minutes of the Governance, Audit and Scrutiny Sub-Committee held on 13 November 2023.	(pages 6 - 8)	Chairperson	To receive
5. Questions by Members	-	Monitoring Officer & Secretary	To receive
6. Communications	-	Chairperson & Chief Fire Officer/Chief Executive	To receive
7. Treasury Management Mid-Year Update Report 2023/24	(pages 9 - 16)	Executive Director of Finance /Section 151 Officer	To receive

Business		Page Number	Lead	Primary Action Requested
8.	Draft Medium-Term Resource Strategy 2024/25 – 2028/29	(pages 17 - 36)	Executive Director of Finance /Section 151 Officer	To receive
9.	Extension of Strategic Plan and Community Risk Management Plan 2021-24	(pages 37 - 40)	Area Manager of Service Improvement	To approve
10.	Workforce Planning (April to September 2023)	(pages 41 - 43)	Executive Director of People and Development	To receive
11.	Real World HR & Values and Culture in Fire and Rescue Services - Update	Verbal	Assistant Chief Fire Officer & Executive Director of People and Development	To receive
12.	Bullying & Harassment Internal Audit Report	(pages 44 - 60)	Executive Director of People and Development	To receive
13.	Response to HMICFRS Annual Assessment of Fire and Rescue Authorities in England	(pages 61 - 74)	Chief Fire Officer/ Chief Executive	To approve
14.	Appeals Committee Update	Verbal	Executive Director of People and Development	To receive
15.	HMICFRS Update	Verbal	Assistant Chief Fire Officer/Executive Director of Corporate Services	To receive
16.	Chief Fire Officer Update	Verbal	Chief Fire Officer/ Chief Executive	To receive
B EXEMPT BUSINESS				
The Authority is asked to consider excluding the press and public from the meeting during consideration of the following item on the grounds that it is likely to involve the disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972. In making its decision, the Fire Authority is asked to confirm that, having regard to all circumstances, it is satisfied that the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.				
17.	Capital Investment to enhance Firefighter Safety and Training Effectiveness	(pages 75 - 85)	Executive Director of People and Development	To approve
18.	Control Software Update	(pages 86 - 88)	Area Manager of Emergency Response	To receive

HUMBERSIDE FIRE AUTHORITY

FRIDAY, 3 NOVEMBER 2023

PRESENT:

Members

Representing East Riding of Yorkshire Council:

Councillors Astell, Casson, Dennis, Gill, Healing, Nolan and Sutton

Representing Hull City Council:

Councillors Henry, Neal and North

Representing North East Lincolnshire Council:

Councillors Lindley, Patrick, Shepherd and Swinburn

Representing North Lincolnshire Council:

Councillors Briggs, Grant, Sherwood and Waltham MBE

Officers of Humberside Fire & Rescue Service

Phil Shillito - Chief Fire Officer & Chief Executive, Matthew Sutcliffe - Assistant Chief Fire Officer & Executive Director of Corporate Services, Niall McKiniry - Deputy Chief Fire Officer & Executive Director of Service Delivery, Martyn Ransom - Executive Director of Finance/Section 151 Officer, Jon Henderson - Area Manager Prevention, Protection, Fleet and Estates, Jason Kirby - Area Manager of Emergency Response, Lisa Nicholson - Monitoring Officer/Secretary and Alison Finn - Committee Manager.

The meeting was held at Service Headquarters, Hessle.

106/23 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE - Apologies for absence were submitted from Councillors Matthews, Meredith, Petrini, Woods and from Jonathan Evison (Police and Crime Commissioner).

107/23 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST - Councillor Dennis declared a non-pecuniary interest in Minute 113 as he owned a property management company.

108/23 MINUTES - Resolved - That the minutes of the meeting of the Authority held on 22 September 2023 be approved as a correct record.

109/23 QUESTIONS BY MEMBERS - there were no questions by Members.

110/23 COMMUNICATIONS - none.

111/23 MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTS PERIOD ENDING 30 SEPTEMBER 2023 - The Executive Director of Finance/Section 151 Officer submitted a report that provided Members with the Management Accounts for the period ending 30 September 2023.

Management Accounts were reported to Members four times a year with the financial position at 30 June, 30 September, 31 December and 28 February.

The summary estimated outturn position for the current financial year based on information to 30 September 2023 was as follows:

CATEGORY	2023/24 OUTTURN PROJECTION
HFA	
Revenue Budget	£0.394m underspend
Capital Programme	£5.069 spend against a £6.719m allocation
Pensions Account	£13.407m deficit

Members were also requested to approve a virement of £361k from interest receivable and interest payable to revenue contribution of capital outlay in order to reduce the Authority's need to borrow.

Resolved - That Members take assurance on the Authority's financial position for the period ending 30 September 2023 and that the virement be approved.

112/23 BI-ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REPORT (APRIL TO SEPTEMBER 2023) - The Assistant Chief Fire Officer/ Executive Director of Corporate Services submitted a report that provided Members with Bi-Annual Performance details.

The Bi-Annual Performance Report, reported on the following area performance metrics between 1 April and 30 September 2023:

- Performance & Risk
- Compliments and Complaints
- Health, Safety and Environment
- Operational Learning
- Occupational Health and Wellbeing
- Absence Management

Members considered the content for each report and took assurance from the Service's approach in performance managing each of the respective areas of work.

Resolved - That the Bi-Annual Performance Report (April – September 2023) be received.

113/23 UPDATE ON BUILDING SAFETY REGULATOR - The Area Manager Prevention and Protection, Fleet and Estate submitted a report that updated Members on the Building Safety Regulator.

The Building Safety Regulator would be an independent regulator with its own powers, strategic plan, and programme of work. It would give expert advice to local regulators such as Humberside Fire and Rescue Service, building owners, the construction and building design industry, and to residents.

The report gave an update on the current position within the Yorkshire and Humber region in relation to the Building Safety Regulator. The regional Building Safety Regulator team would consist of seven Inspecting Officers, one Fire Engineer, one Building Safety Regulator Manager and one remotely based administrative support post. Recruitment was currently underway for the Building Safety Regulator Manager and Fire Engineer post. Humberside Fire and Rescue Service would not employ any of the Building Safety Regulator staff. One Inspecting Officer post would be shared with North Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service who would be the employer.

Following a recent recruitment exercise, a regional manager and engineer would soon be in place and working to support the recruitment of the remaining team members.

Resolved - That report be received.

114/23 GRENFELL UPDATE - The Area Manager Prevention and Protection, Fleet and Estate submitted a report that updated Members on the Grenfell Tower Inquiry recommendations.

On 30 October 2019, The Grenfell Tower Inquiry, chaired by Sir Martin Moore-Bick, published its Phase 1 report. That highlighted a number of issues and provided 46 recommendations for fire and rescue services and other stakeholder groups including building owners and Government.

From those 46 recommendations, 29 were aimed at Fire and Rescue Services. 14 solely aimed at London Fire Brigade, with the remaining 15 directed to fire and rescue services more broadly.

There had been progress on a national level since the publication of the Government's last update. For example, the average rate of completion by Fire and Rescue Services of their action plans to address the Inquiry recommendations, had risen from 81 per cent to 91 per cent.

The completion rate of Humberside Fire and Rescue Services action plan currently stood at 94 per cent, slightly above the national average, with 2 open actions.

Members took assurance that the Service was in a secure position in relation to the Grenfell Tower Inquiry Panel Phase 1 recommendations.

Resolved - That report be received.

115/23 SERIOUS VIOLENCE DUTY – The Area Manager Prevention and Protection, Fleet and Estate submitted a report that updated Members on the Serious Violence Duty.

The Serious Violence Duty was launched in January 2023 and put a statutory duty on the Fire Authority to prevent, reduce and address the root causes of serious violence. The Duty required Fire and Rescue Authorities, and specified authorities to work together to share information, collaborate, and plan to prevent, reduce and address the root causes of serious violence within their local communities. The Duty made up part of statutory Fire and Rescue Service provision. Furthermore, the Duty aligned with existing legislative duties, including the current Fire and Rescue Services Act (2004) and the Duty to Collaborate as contained within The Policing and Crime Act (2017). Enhancing policies, training, data sharing and collaboration would empower Fire and Rescue Services to tackle serious violence while delivering core prevention, protection, and emergency response functions.

Humberside Fire and Rescue Service proposed that their Serious Violence Duty strategy had 3 key areas of focus:

- Collaborative Working
- Safer Staff
- Early Interventions

Collaborative working was already well embedded with Service activities with examples such as the Falls Teams, Violence Prevention Partnership, Community Safety Partnership, Safer Roads Humber and Hull Area Governance.

The Duty supported, and improved, those existing arrangements for legislating other organisations to work collaboratively and ensure information and data was shared appropriately. The Service had a duty to have a published Serious Violence Strategy in place by January 2024.

Resolved - That the Serious Violence Duty Strategy be approved.

116/23 MODERN SLAVERY STATEMENT 2023/24 - The Assistant Chief Fire Officer/ Executive Director of Corporate Services submitted a report that updated Members on Modern Slavery.

Humberside Fire Authority had a zero-tolerance approach to modern slavery and was committed to acting ethically and with integrity in all business dealings and relationships, and to implementing and enforcing effective systems and controls to ensure modern slavery was not taking place anywhere in its own business, or in any of its supply chains.

Although not a statutory requirement for public sector organisations to do so, the Service had produced a statement under Section 54(1) of the Modern Slavery Act 2015 which constituted the Authority's Modern Slavery Statement for the financial year ending 31 March 2024.

The Authority's modern slavery and human trafficking statement reflected the commitment to acting ethically, vigilantly and with integrity in all business relationships; and implementing and enforcing systems and controls that sought to ensure slavery and human trafficking was not taking place in any areas of the business or supply chains.

The Authority would not support or deal with any business knowingly involved in slavery or human trafficking in any part of its operations. Any instances of non-compliance would be assessed on a case-by-case basis and remedial action tailored appropriately.

Resolved - That the Modern Slavery Statement 2023/24 be approved.

117/23 REAL WORLD HR NOVEMBER 2023 UPDATE - The Assistant Chief Fire Officer/Executive Director of Corporate Services submitted a report that updated Members on Real World HR.

The report provided an update on the continuing cultural journey the Service was taking in light of the number of reports on the culture within the Fire and Rescue Sector being published over the past six months.

In April, the Service issued a tendering exercise to several suitably skilled suppliers in the market to carry out independent staff engagement. Real World HR was appointed to carry out an independent staff engagement process relating to values and culture, undertaking the engagement process with staff across the Service. Within the contract, it was proposed that the Service would receive a completed report with findings from the Real World HR in November 2023. Real World HR was nearing the completion of its independent engagement process, with the report now being compiled.

Members took assurance by the approach taken by the Service in ensuring the values and culture of the Service were understood and improved, ensuring that a safe and supportive working environment was provided for all.

Resolved - That the update be received.

118/23 OUTCOME OF STAFF DEVELOPMENT AUDIT - The Assistant Chief Fire Officer/Executive Director of Corporate Services submitted a report that updated Members on the outcome of the Staff Development Audit.

The report outlined the outcome of the internal audit assurance review of staff development within the Service conducted by TIAA. The internal audit conducted by TIAA gave an overall assessment of 'substantial assurance', the highest level of assurance during an audit and identified areas of good practice in relation to the introduction of the Portfolio Pathway Process and HR policies supporting the People Strategy and Workforce Plan.

The audit also made a few findings which were detailed in the report.

Key strategic findings included:

- The development of employees within the Service including talent management, succession planning and how the workforce was planned was underpinned by a People Strategy (2023/2024) and the Workforce Plan (2022-2025);
- Testing identified that the Service had put in place an open, fair, and transparent process to identify, develop, and support high-potential staff and aspiring leaders, and
- There were practices in place that ensured employees were given the opportunity to develop within the Service.

Members took assurance that the TIAA audit on staff development within the Service had been given 'substantial assurance' and that several areas of good practice had been identified.

Resolved - That update be received.

119/23 CHIEF FIRE OFFICER UPDATE - The Chief Fire Officer/Chief Executive provided a verbal update.

- The Chief Fire Officer passed on his thanks to the Members of the Appeals Committee who had supported officers during the recent appeal.
- Positive comments had been received from Local M.P.'s in response to letters from the Chief Fire Officer and the Chairman of the Fire Authority regarding the lack of funding for the Service.
- Operation Topaz was underway to manage incidents relating to bonfire night and diversionary activities were in place in conjunction with Humberside Police.
- The latest intake of full-time firefighters would complete their training and pass out in December.
- The Service's annual Recognition Awards which recognise the hard work, commitment and great achievements of staff would take place on 10 November 2023.
- Humberside Fire and Rescue Service would be well represented at Remembrance Sunday events in all four Local Authority areas and crews would be present at all local cenotaphs.
- The HMICFRS thematic inspection on the handling of misconduct would commence on Monday 6 November and conclude on Friday 24 November 2023.
- The recent bad weather had caused some flooding issues that the service had attended and managed in collaboration with the Local Resilience Forum and good feedback had been received.
- There had been an attack on Fire crews in Grimsby recently which had led to one arrest by the Police. The investigation was ongoing.
- The Chief Fire Officer had been advised that the Government's response to the White Paper was due before Christmas following the King's speech.

Resolved - That the update be noted.

120/23 EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS/PUBLIC - Resolved - That the press and public be excluded from the meeting for consideration of the following item on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

In making its decision the Authority confirmed that having regard to all the circumstances it was satisfied that the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighed the public interest in disclosing the information.

121/23 BRANSHOLME FIRE STATION CPU ANNEX - PROPOSED SALE - The Area Manager Prevention and Protection, Fleet and Estate provided a report that updated Members on the proposed sale of Bransholme Fire Station CPU Annex.

Resolved - That the sale of Bransholme Fire Station CPU Annex be approved.

At the conclusion of the meeting, the Authority made a presentation to Group Manager Simon Rhodes, Head of Corporate Assurance who, after 41 years of service to Humberside Fire and Rescue Service, would be retiring shortly. The Authority thanked Mr Rhodes for his outstanding contribution to the Service over the years and wished him well on his retirement.

HUMBERSIDE FIRE AUTHORITY
GOVERNANCE, AUDIT AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

13 NOVEMBER 2023

PRESENT: Independent Co-opted Members Chris Brown, Melissa Dearey, Kathryn Lavery and Nigel Saxby.

Officers Present: Matthew Sutcliffe – Assistant Chief Fire Officer & Executive Director of Corporate Services, Christine Cooper – Executive Director of People and Development, Steve Duffield – Area Manager of Service Improvement, Shaun Edwards – Joint Deputy Chief Finance Officer & Deputy S.151 Officer, Jon Henderson – Area Manager of Prevention and Protection, Jason Kirby – Area Manager of Emergency Response, Jamie Morris – Designate Head of Corporate Assurance, Sam O'Connor – Head of Organisational Development, Martyn Ransom – Joint Chief Finance Officer & S.151 Officer, Claire Tait – Head of Operational Training, David Robinson – Internal Audit (TIAA), Andy McCulloch – Internal Audit (TIAA), Lisa Nicholson – Monitoring Officer/Secretary, Alison Finn – Committee Manager and Rob Close – Committee Manager.

Councillor Briggs was also in attendance.

The meeting was held at the Humberside Fire and Rescue Service Headquarters, Kingston upon Hull.

47/23 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE – Apologies for absence were received from Gerry Wareham.

48/23 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST – No declarations of interest were made with respect to any items on the agenda.

47/23 MINUTES – *Resolved* – That the minutes of the meeting held on 4 September 2023 be confirmed as a correct record.

48/23 INTERNAL AUDIT REPORTS – The Committee received a report of TIAA, the Authority's internal auditors, detailing internal audit activity. The Committee was advised that, since the last Summary Internal Controls Assurance, six final audits were issued. In the final report, the bullying, harassment & discrimination, mobile data terminals, and effectiveness of systems audits all received reasonable assurance while the staff development and service absolutes received substantial assurance.

A fair sample size of staff were selected as respondents to the audit of bullying, harassment & discrimination, with representation from different levels of management. Moving forwards, there was a view to separate the role of the Freedom to Speak Up Guardian from Human Resources and broaden it to more members of staff.

The recommendations identified as part of the mobile data terminals audit were managed through the service improvement plan. The Service had since withdrawn from the Home Office connectivity in favour of pursuing a bespoke alternative. 4G enabled devices had already been installed and a full hardware replacement was expected by April 2024 while broader reengineering and training continued. While only mandated to share up to 10km of risk data with neighbouring Fire Authorities, Humberside Fire and Rescue opted to share and receive data from the whole area.

The outstanding 15 recommendations, detailed in the Mid-Year Follow Up Review, were largely outside of the Service's control, with one recommendation being superseded by a subsequent recommendation, and internal audit were satisfied that the delays were not unjustified. It was appreciated that some completion dates for recommendations were ambitious.

It was clarified that station managers were expected to display heat maps in stations. The data that informed those heat maps was collected as part of a briefing held monthly looking over the previous period. Officers were satisfied that the Service was both data rich with effective data intelligence.

Resolved – (a) *That the mid year follow up review be scheduled at the most appropriate point in the year to ensure a more timely update on the progression of recommendations;*

(b) *That the update be noted, and the Committee thank TIAA for their assiduous efforts.*

49/23 MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTS PERIOD ENDING 30 SEPTEMBER 2023 – The Committee received a report of the Joint Chief Finance Officer and Deputy Section 151 Officer detailing the final outturn report. The Committee was advised that the £0.394m underspend arose from lower green book pay award and ICT costs. Additional investment income and grant funding led to a capital programme underspend.

Officers were satisfied that the Service was receiving value for money for its staffing pay underspend. The vacant temporary roles underspend was invested into other priority areas and had no impact to the permeant baseline budget. Management of these vacant posts was decided at a senior management team level

Resolved - *That the report be received.*

50/23 TREASURY MANAGEMENT HALF YEAR REPORT 2022/23 – The Committee received a report of Joint Deputy Chief Finance Officer updated the Committee on the treasury management activities for the first half of the financial year 2022/23. The Committee was advised that the Service had not taken any short term borrowing in the first six months of the year and was unlikely to undertake short-term borrowing in the second half of the financial year. Moreover, the Service had not undertaken any new long-term borrowing so far this financial year but this position would be reviewed in the second half of the financial year. During the period April to September 2023, the Service operated wholly within the Prudential limits approved.

Resolved - *That the report be received.*

51/23 SCRUTINY ITEM: ON-CALL STAFF LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT – The Committee received a report of the Head of Organisational Development detailing the on-call staff learning and development opportunities offered by Humberside Fire and Rescue. The Committee was advised there were a number of challenges for both the Service and On-Call firefighters in achieving and maintaining the required level of competency and standards. These challenges consisted of availability constraints from primary employment and other personal commitments, disruptions from responses demands, maintenance of work life balance, geographical limitations, limited study availability and challenges for promotion.

On call staff were still subject to Performance Development Review (PDR) and Training Needs Analysis (TNA) processes with paid extra hours allowed if sufficient contracted work time was not available. The PDR process included a section on the Core Code of Ethics which was further enhanced through the introduction of a 360-degree feedback tool for all supervisory managers and above. The completion rate for PDR's during 2023 was 94 per cent overall with Emergency Response, including On-Call firefighters, completion rate at 95 per cent. The Service was currently awaiting the results of the RealWorldHR staff survey which might indicate areas of action in relation to on-call personnel and their development or PDR opportunities that could be considered for any further improvements.

The Committee then considered the following aspects:

- **Testing** – Practical testing was the same for both On-Call and Full Time Firefighters which contributed to the Service's ambitions of integration and parity.
- **Development of Training**– Focus groups were held to ensure that the lived experiences of On-Call Firefighters were accommodated into a dedicated work stream develop the training provision of On-Call Firefighters. This resulted in a move towards more localised training sessions planned for appliance training in 2024. Ultimately, the training offer of Humberside Fire and Rescue did not appear to be of detriment to the On-Call Firefighters given its position as the third highest performing Service in the UK on issues of recruitment and retention.
- **Accessibility** – Despite the delays neurodivergence diagnoses from GPs, wherever possible, the Service sought to make reasonable adjustments to the provision of training and the methods of evaluation in the endeavour of equality of opportunity.
- **Availability** – The Service greatly appreciated the dedication of On-Call Firefighters to take time outside of their allotted hours to develop and was exploring opportunities for reward those efforts.

Resolved – *That the Committee endorses the Service's continuing commitment to learning and development for On-Call firefighters.*

52/23 GAS COMMITTEE SCRUTINY PROGRAMME 2023/24 – The Committee Manager submitted a report summarising the Committee's Scrutiny Programme 2023/24.

Resolved - *That the Programme be received.*

TREASURY MANAGEMENT MID-YEAR UPDATE REPORT

1. SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report provides an update on the Authority's treasury management activities for the first half of the financial year 2023/24.

2. MATTER FOR CONSIDERATION

- 2.1 That Members consider the treasury management activities undertaken during the first half of 2023/24 and the Prudential Indicators as outlined in paragraphs 4.9 and 4.10 and detailed in Appendix 1.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 Treasury Management, as defined by the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIFPA) Code of Practice 2009 is:

"The management of the organisation's investments and cash-flows, its banking, money market and capital market transactions, the effective control of the risks associated with those activities and the pursuit of the optimum performance consistent with those risks."

- 3.2 The Authority on 10 March 2023 approved the annual 2023/24 Treasury Management Policy Statement and agreed a range of Prudential Indicators aimed at ensuring effective treasury management and affordability of capital plans.
- 3.3 This report ensures compliance with recommended practice as outlined in the Code, by providing Members with an update on treasury management undertaken since the beginning of the financial year and highlighting key Prudential Indicator information

4. PERIOD ENDING 30 SEPTEMBER 2023

Investment Activity

- 4.1 The Authority's temporary investments totalled £21.6m as at 30 September 2023.

Table 1 – Investment income earned April to September 2023

Interest Earned April to September 2023	Rate of return April to September 2023	Benchmark return at 30 September 2023*	Difference (Favourable) April to September 2023
£242k	4.76%	4.74%	(0.02%)

* Benchmark set as average SONIA (Sterling OverNight Index Average)

- 4.2 The Authority's rate of return has exceeded the benchmark return provided by Link Asset Services.

Borrowing

Short-Term Borrowing

- 4.3 The Authority has not taken any short-term borrowing in the first six months of the year. The Authority is unlikely to undertake short-term borrowing in the second half of the financial year.

Long-Term Borrowing

- 4.4 Long-term loans are taken out either to replace existing loans which have matured or to fund capital expenditure. Under the Prudential Regime there are no longer centrally imposed limits on borrowing, but individual Authorities are required to determine themselves what is a sustainable and affordable level of borrowing as an integral part of their Medium-Term Financial Planning processes.
- 4.5 The Authority's level of borrowing was £17.2m as at 30 September 2023, with an equated average rate of interest payable at 3.13%. An expected £545k of interest is projected to be payable on external debt for 2023/24.
- 4.6 The Authority has not undertaken any new long-term borrowing so far this financial year but this position will be reviewed in the second half of the financial year against the backdrop of interest rate changes and projections.

Prudential Indicators

- 4.7 Appendix 1 details the Prudential Indicators agreed by Members at the Fire Authority on 11 March 2023 and shows for comparison the actual figures as at 30 September 2023.
- 4.8 During the period April to September 2023, the Authority operated wholly within the limits approved.

Capital Expenditure

- 4.9 The S.151 Officer considers the current capital programme to be affordable and sustainable with the revenue effects of capital investment built into the Medium-Term Financial Plan. Through the Medium-Term Financial Planning Process the Authority has ensured alignment of its capital resources to key strategic priorities.

Treasury Management

- 4.10 External debt is currently £21.8m below the agreed authorised limit for 2023/24 and the maturity structure for both borrowing and investments remain within the approved upper and lower limits. Subsequent borrowing or re-scheduling will take in to account prevailing interest rates on offer from the Public Works Loans Board, the current maturity structure of loans, balanced with the need to reduce capital risk by maintaining prudently low levels of cash-balances.

Resourcing/Financial Implications

- 4.11 The Authority's approach to investment of surplus funds is designed to further mitigate against potential losses as a consequence of counterparty failure and reflects a prudent approach to treasury management activity.

Legal Implications

- 4.12 The Authority must comply with the requirements of the CIPFA Code of Practice on Treasury Management and the Local Authorities (Capital Finance and Accounting) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2008. This report ensures such compliance.

Linkages to any Strategic/Corporate Plans/Policies

- 4.13 The application of and regular monitoring thereafter of a prudent Treasury Management Policy and related Prudential Indicators ensures that the Authority effectively manages financial risks such as exposure to interest rate changes, liquidity and market risk whilst minimising borrowing costs and maximising investment income. As an integral part of the financial planning process, it ensures that the financial plans upon which the Authority's Strategic Plan is based are effective and robust.

5. EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 There is no requirement to carry out an equality impact analysis as this report does not relate to a policy or service delivery change.

6. CONCLUSION

- 6.1 Members are requested to consider the treasury management activities undertaken during the first half of 2023/24 and the Prudential Indicators as outlined in paragraphs 4.9 and 4.10 and detailed in Appendix 1.

Martyn Ransom
Executive Director of Finance/S151 Officer

Officer Contact

Martyn Ransom – Executive Director of Finance/S151 Officer
✉ mransom@humbersidefire.gov.uk

Background Papers

Treasury Management and Capital Expenditure Prudential Indicators, Management Policy Statement 2023/24 and Minimum Revenue Provision 2023/24 – Report to Fire Authority March 2023
CIPFA Code of Practice on Treasury Management
CIPFA Treasury Management Guidance

Abbreviations

CIPFA	Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy
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Prudential Indicators as at 30 September 2023**Indicator 1 - Capital Expenditure**

The actual capital expenditure for the current year compared to the original estimate and revised budget, together with estimates of expenditure to be incurred in future years are shown below:

	2022/23	2023/24	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27
	Actual	Budget	Revised*	Estimate	Estimate	Estimate
	£k	£k	£k	£k	£k	£k
Total Capital expenditure	3,238	6,719	5,069	5,664	3,482	3,440

*the revised 2023/24 figure reflects the latest estimate of spend, as reported to Members in the Management Accounts for the period ending 30th September 2023.

Indicator 2 - Capital Financing Requirement

The capital financing requirement for 2023/24 and estimates for future years are as follows:-

	Actual	Estimate	Estimate	Estimate	Estimate
	31/03/23	31/03/24	31/03/25	31/03/26	31/03/27
	£k	£k	£k	£k	£k
Capital Financing Requirement	18,399	20,169	22,837	23,200	23,308
Lease - Integrated Care Centre	1,013	996	977	956	933
Total CFR	19,412	21,165	23,814	24,156	24,241

The capital financing requirement measures the Authority's need to borrow for capital purposes. In accordance with best professional practice, the Humberside Fire Authority does not associate borrowing with particular items or types of expenditure. The Authority has, at any point in time, a number of cash flows both positive and negative, and manages its treasury position in terms of its borrowings and investments in accordance with its approved Strategy. In day to day cash management, no distinction can be made between revenue cash and capital cash. External borrowing arises as a consequence of all the financial transactions of the authority and not simply those arising from capital spending. In contrast, the capital financing requirement reflects the Authority's underlying need to borrow for a capital purpose.

A key indicator of prudence under the Prudential Code is: -

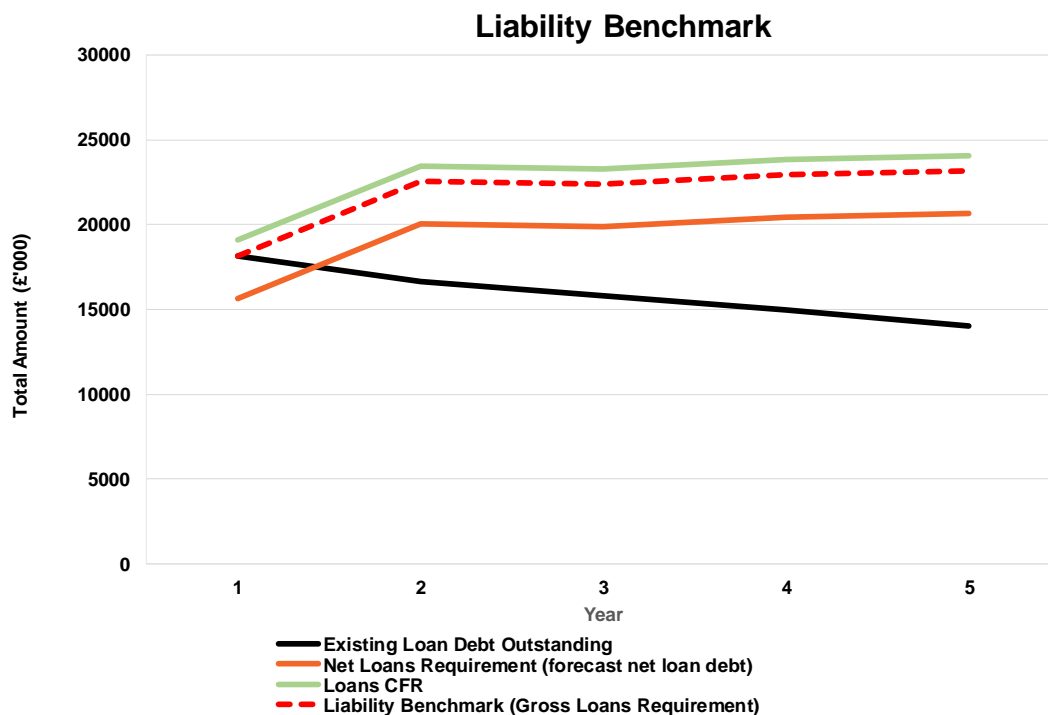
"In order to ensure that over the medium term net borrowing will only be for a capital purpose, the local authority should ensure that net external borrowing does not, except in the short term, exceed the total of the capital financing requirement in the preceding year plus the estimates of any additional capital financing requirement for the current and next two financial years".

The S151 Officer reports that the Authority has had no difficulty meeting this requirement during the course of this financial year and no difficulties are envisaged in future years. This takes into account current commitments, existing plans and the proposals contained in the Medium Term-Financial Plan.

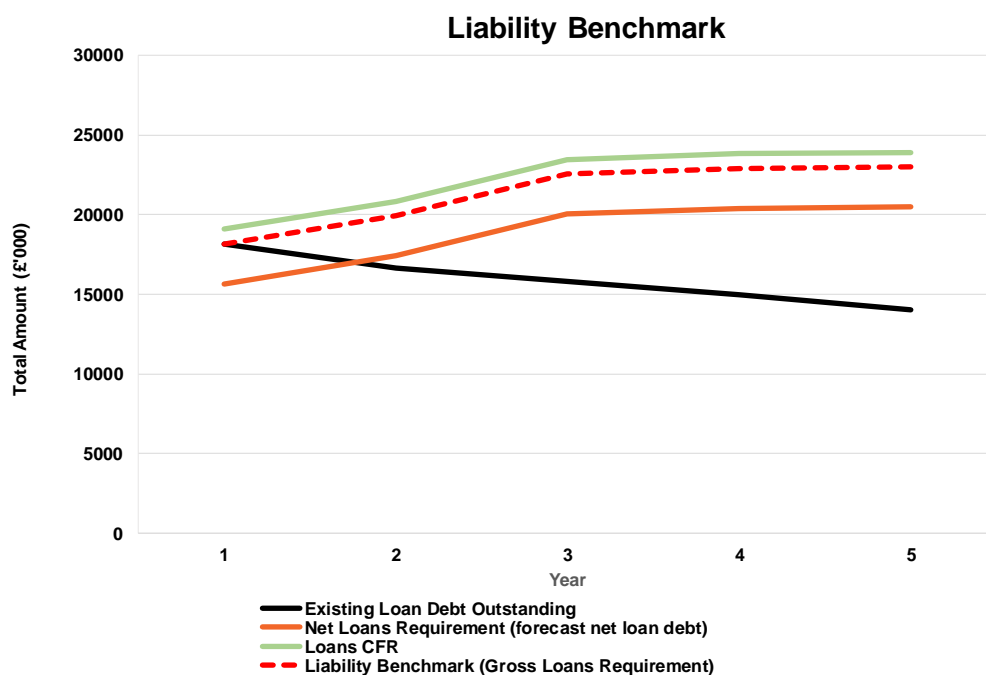
Indicator 3 – Liability Benchmark

The Authority is required estimate and measure the Liability Benchmark for the forthcoming year and the following two years as a minimum.

The following graph shows what the Liability Benchmark was estimated to be for 2023/24 onwards as set in the Treasury Management Strategy 2023/24:



The Liability Benchmark has been updated to show revised estimates for 2023/24 onwards and is shown in the graph below:



The revised graph shows that the gap between existing loans outstanding and our future need to borrow (as shown by the liability benchmark line on the graph above) is reducing as we contribute more funding to reduce the need to borrow in the future. The gap between the

liability benchmark and the Existing Loan Debt Outstanding is the amount of borrowing that the Authority may have to take in the future, and there is therefore a risk that borrowing may have to be taken when the interest rate is in excess of the budgeted rate.

Indicator 4 – Core Funds and Expected Investment Balances

The table below shows the estimates of the year-end balances for each resource and anticipated day-to-day cash flow balances.

	2023/24 Original £k	2023/24 Revised £k	2024/25 Estimate £k	2025/26 Estimate £k	2026/27 Estimate £k
Total Core Funds	13,330	14,558	12,259	12,079	12,957
Expected Investments	5,030	8,558	3,750	3,379	4,149

The actual total investments held as at 30th September 2023 is £21.6m. This is higher than the expected investments due to the Pensions grant of which 80% was received in July 2023 which is drawn upon each month.

Indicator 5 - Operational Boundary for External Debt

The proposed operational boundary for external debt is based on the same estimates as the authorised limit but reflects directly the S151 Officer's estimate of the most likely, prudent but not worst case scenario, without the additional headroom included within the authorised limit to allow for example for unusual cash movements, and equates to the maximum of external debt projected by this estimate. The operational boundary represents a key management tool for in year monitoring by the S151 Officer.

	2023/24 Boundary £k	Actual As at 30/09/23 £k	2024/25 Boundary £k	2025/26 Boundary £k	2026/27 Boundary £k
Borrowing	31,500	17,169	31,500	31,500	31,500
Other Long-Term Liabilities	3,500	996	3,500	3,500	3,500
	35,000	18,165	35,000	35,000	35,000

The S151 Officer confirms that borrowing in the year has not exceeded the operational boundary at any point within the year to date and is not expected to do so over the course of the next period based on information currently available.

Indicator 6 - Authorised Limit for External Debt

The table below shows the Authorised limit for External Debt for 2023/24 and subsequent three-year period as approved by Members, compared to the actual level of borrowing as at 30 September 2023.

	2023/24	Actual as at	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27
	Limit	30/09/23	Limit	Limit	Limit
	£k	£k	£k	£k	£k
Borrowing	36,500	17,169	36,500	36,500	36,500
Other Long-Term Liabilities	3,500	996	3,500	3,500	3,500
	40,000	18,165	40,000	40,000	40,000

The Authorised Limit reflects the Authority's projected long and short-term borrowing requirements, together with any other long-term liabilities it may have. The figures are based on the estimate of most likely, prudent but not worst-case scenario, with sufficient headroom over and above this to allow for operational management of, for example unusual cash movements.

The S151 Officer confirms that the Authorised Limit has not been approached at any point during the first half of the year, nor is it likely to during the remaining six months of 2023/24.

Indicator 7 - Ratio of Capital Financing Costs to Net Revenue Stream

The ratio of financing costs to net revenue stream for the current year and estimates for future years are as follows: -

	2022/23	2023/24	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27
	Actual	Original	Revised	Estimate	Estimate	Estimate
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Ratio of Financial Costs to Net Revenue Stream	3.03	2.81	2.03	3.75	3.84	4.07

These ratios indicate the proportion of the net budget of the Authority that is required to finance the costs of capital expenditure in any year. Estimates of financing costs include current commitments and the proposals contained in the capital programme of the Authority.

In calculating the ratio, Net Revenue Streams in any year have been taken to exclude any element of the net budget requirement that is intended to provide reserves for the Authority.

The projected increase in the ratio over the period reflects the increase in capital financing costs resulting from the capital allocations approved as part of the medium-term financial plan.

Indicator 8 – Upper and Lower Limits for the maturity structure of borrowings

This indicator seeks to ensure the Authority controls its exposure to the risk of interest rate changes by limiting the proportion of debt maturing in any single period. Ordinarily debt is replaced on maturity and therefore it is important that the Authority is not forced to replace a large proportion of loans at a time of relatively high interest rates.

“The Authority will set for the forthcoming financial year both upper and lower limits with respect to the maturity structure of its borrowings. The prudential indicators will be referred to as the upper and lower limits respectively for the maturity structure of borrowing and shall be calculated as follows:

Amount of projected borrowing that is fixed rate maturing in each period expressed as a percentage of total projected borrowing that is fixed rate;

Where the periods in question are:

- Under 12 months
- 12 months and within 24 months
- 24 months and within 5 years
- 5 years and within 10 years
- 10 years and above”

	Actual as at 30/09/23	Upper Limit	Lower Limit
	%	%	%
Under 12 Months	2.91	15	0
12 months and within 24 months	7.23	15	0
24 months and within 5 years	19.97	30	0
5 years and within 10 years	40.77	60	0
10 years and above	29.12	80	0

The S151. Officer confirms that the maturity structure of external debt as at 30/09/23 is within the upper and lower limits approved by the Authority.

MEDIUM TERM RESOURCE STRATEGY 2024/25 ONWARDS

1. SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report considers the Authority's Medium-Term Resource Strategy (MTRS) for the years 2024/25 to 2028/29 (as set out at Appendix A) and provides details of the Authority's Reserves.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 It is recommended that the Fire Authority notes the draft Medium-Term Resource Strategy (Appendix A) and the Authority's medium-term financial position.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The Authority has a strong track record in dealing with the significant challenges that austerity has brought since 2011 and has delivered £11m of efficiencies as a response to the £11m reduction in funding. This has involved early decision-making regarding efficiencies so that the impact on the Service can be kept to an absolute minimum.
- 3.2 The Authority has produced a Productivity and Efficiency Plan, and efficiency targets are included in all non-pay budgets to ensure the funding we receive is used effectively.

4. REPORT DETAIL

Summary Revenue Position

- 4.1 The current MTRS (Appendix A) contains the following assumptions;

Current Assumptions for 2024/25

Pay	4%
Precept	£4.99
Grant	5.5%
Non-pay savings target	3%

- 4.2 The current MTRS shows that a predicted deficit is expected over the next four years, this is likely to require the use of £2.6m from reserves over this period, before returning to a surplus in 2028/29.

Current Funding Gap/(Surplus)

	2024/25 £'000	2025/26 £'000	2026/27 £'000	2027/28 £'000	2028/29 £'000	Total £'000
(Surplus)/Deficit (to)/from Reserves	483	1,217	643	248	(208)	2,383

Pay Inflation

- 4.3 Inflationary pressure remains on pay awards and as outlined above will be a significant financial risk in the medium term. Our current pay inflation assumption for 2024/25 is 4%, any pay award above this would cost £0.4m per 1% of additional award.

- 4.4 The current assumption is that there will be no additional funding from the Home Office to cover this increase.
- 4.5 The pay and prices earmarked reserve (£0.6m) could be used to meet these additional costs temporarily, however this would cause a deficit over the medium term.

Non-Pay inflation

- 4.6 Non-pay inflation remains high (although it is now falling) with higher prices feeding through contract agreements and purchases of equipment.

Grant Funding

- 4.7 Revenue Support grant income will be amended once the settlement is received from Government, this is expected in mid-December.

Reserves

- 4.8 Reserves are held by the Authority to meet general financial risks and costs that may materialise (The General Reserve) and to meet specific project costs or financial liabilities (Earmarked Reserves).
- 4.9 The General Reserve will be reduced to £6m (PMGR) following the end of the 2023/24 Financial year following approval at the September 2023 HFA meeting.
- 4.10 Earmarked Reserves are held for specific purposes and as such are committed to fund expected future expenditure, some earmarked reserves are 'ring-fenced' as they are made up of grant funding received with conditions.
- 4.11 The current earmarked reserves are detailed below;

Earmarked Reserve	1 April 2024 £m	Reason
Insurance	0.500	To meet any excesses on the Authority's insurance arrangements
National Flood Resilience Centre	1.000	HFA contribution to joint National Flood Resilience Centre
Capital Programme Funding	3.410	To support investment in capital projects and reduce the Authority's need to borrow
Business Continuity	0.500	To meet a proportion of the costs of a business continuity event
Emergency Services Mobile Communication Programme	0.215	Ring-fenced grant received to support the national Emergency Services Mobile Communication Programme.
Service Improvement and Environmental Reserve	0.030	To support environmental initiatives
Strategic Transformation fund	0.500	To support and pump prime change initiatives
Control Room	1.000	To support the replacement control room system
Pay and Prices	0.600	To cover any short-term impacts of pay and price inflation
Total Earmarked Reserves	7.755	

- 4.12 The total level of reserves held by the Authority is in the 3rd quartile as a percentage of revenue budget (English Fire and Rescue Services). (Appendix A).

5. EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 There is no requirement to carry out an equality impact analysis as this report does not relate to a policy or service delivery change.

6. CONCLUSION

- 6.1 Members are asked to note the draft MTRS.

Martyn Ransom
Executive Director of Finance &
S.151 Officer

Officer Contact

Martyn Ransom – Executive Director of Finance/S.151 Officer
✉ mransom@humbersidefire.gov.uk

Background Papers

Budget report to HFA February 2023
Financial Outlook September 2024

Abbreviations

CPI	Consumer Prices Index
HFA	Humberside Fire Authority
MTRS	Medium Term Resource Strategy
PMGR	the Prudent Minimum level of General Reserves



HUMBERSIDE FIRE AUTHORITY

MEDIUM-TERM RESOURCE STRATEGY 2024/25 – 2028/29

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I. Purpose of the Medium-Term Resource Strategy

- 1.1 This is the Medium-Term Resource Strategy (MTRS) of Humberside Fire Authority. It covers a period of four years but will be reviewed annually to reflect the dynamic nature of both the fire service and changes in funding. It describes the financial direction of the organisation and outlines financial pressures.
- 1.2 The MTRS provides options for delivering a sustainable budget and capital programme over the medium term. It also sets out how the Authority can provide the resources to deliver the priorities in the Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP) within the challenging financial climate.
- 1.3 The MTRS sets the financial context for the Authority's revenue budget, capital programme and precepting decisions.
- 1.4 The overall financial strategy seeks to deliver the Authority's Community Risk Management Plan, 2021 - 2024.

2. Aims of the Strategy

- 2.1 The MTRS assists in:
 - (i) Supporting delivery of the Community Risk Management Plan 2021-2024;
 - (ii) Improving financial planning and the financial management of the Authority's resources, both revenue and capital;
 - (iii) Maximising the use of resources available to the Authority, both internal and external;
 - (iv) Ensuring that the Authority provides value for money and continues to deliver efficiency gains;
 - (v) Reviewing the Authority's policy on the use of reserves, ensuring the position continues to be sustainable and that there are sufficient resources over the medium term;
 - (vi) Responding to external pressures, including changes to funding resulting from the Government's annual funding announcements.
 - (vii) Ensuring that the Authority's long-term plans are sustainable and efficient.

3. Principles of the Strategy

- 3.1 The key principles underlying the Authority's MTRS 2024/25 – 2028/29 are:
 - (i) Overall expenditure of the Authority will be contained within original estimates each year.
 - (ii) The Authority will maintain a Prudent Minimum General Reserve (PMGR), reviewed annually, to cover any major unforeseen expenditure or loss of funding. A flexible approach will be taken to the use of reserve balances above this level where appropriate, balancing the opportunity costs of maintaining reserves against the benefits of alternative approaches.
 - (iii) The Authority will maintain earmarked reserves for specific purposes only when appropriate, and which are consistent with achieving objectives.

- (iv) The Authority will continue to prioritise the achievement of Value for Money, securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in the use of resources; in establishing the framework for the Fire Service within Humberside and; in commissioning and procurement decisions.
- (v) The Authority's Chief Finance Officer will prepare a rolling programme of five-year budget forecasts to inform the Authority's budget and precepting decisions.
- (vi) The Authority, supported by the Authority's Chief Finance Officer and Chief Fire Officer/Chief Executive, will continue to contribute to national reviews of fire funding and take every opportunity to engage in order to pursue the fair and equitable funding of Humberside Fire Authority.

4. Reviewing the Strategy

4.1 The Authority's MTRS review for 2024/25 to 2028/29 has been carried out under the following key themes:

- (i) The financial context in which the Authority operates;
- (ii) The Authority's current financial position;
- (iii) The impact of the revised CRMP including the impact of the Grenfell Tower tragedy, increased focus on business safety and Local and National Resilience arrangements;
- (iv) The impact of inflation;
- (v) The future budget pressures that the Authority will face over the period of the strategy;
- (vi) Budget savings;
- (vii) The Authority's capital programme;
- (viii) Reserves policy;
- (ix) Risk assessment;
- (x) Financial Resilience.

5. Community Risk Management Plan

- 5.1 The successful delivery of the Strategy requires the Chief Fire Officer to manage a complex set of resources, demands, and priorities whilst reviewing and revising plans to meet the risk profile for fire services within the available financial resources.
- 5.2 HMICFRS (His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services) considers that a Service is efficient if it is making the best use of its resources to provide fire services that meet expectation and follow public priorities, and if it is planning and investing wisely for the future.
- 5.3 The Authority's MTRS is underpinned by workforce planning and capital programmes which are aligned with the delivery of the Community Risk Management Plan priorities and the continued delivery of an efficient and effective fire service to the communities of Humberside.
- 5.4 The Service is instrumental in identifying the risk in communities and providing engagement using the community safety teams. The CRMP identifies the level of risk in each of the four Local Authority areas and resources are located and distributed on this basis. The intervention standards allow measurement of the response to incidents based on the risk rating established.

6. Financial Context

- 6.1 **Funding Formula** - The Fire and Rescue Service relative needs formula (RNF) used to distribute Grant between Fire and Rescue Services was introduced in 2010/11 and much of the data used has not been updated. There has been recognition for many years that the formula no longer reflects needs, but previous attempts at reform of the relative needs formula in 2018 have not come to fruition due to various technical/political considerations. No change is anticipated to the RNF formula until at least 2025/26 at the earliest and therefore, the MTRS has made no assumptions in this regard.
- 6.2 **Local Government Finance Settlement and Council Tax Precept** – The Autumn Statement was announced on the 22nd November 2023. Following this announcement amendments to grant and council tax assumptions have been made. The Provisional Local Government Finance Settlement and Council Tax referendum rules are expected to be announced in mid-December 2023.
- 6.3 This MTRS as presented includes an increase in the precept of £4.99 for a Band D property for 2024/25. An increase of 2.99% has also been included for future years. Final decisions on the actual precept will be made each year by the Authority based on the financial circumstances at the time.
- 6.4 The Secretary of State determines the maximum increase that Fire and Rescue Authorities can make to Council Tax Precept without requiring a referendum and in 2024/25 this is £x.
- 6.5 The Authority has run a public consultation on the level of Council Tax Precept for 2024/25. There have been xxx responses with xx% of these agreeing with an increase.

7. Current 2023/24 Financial Position

- 7.1 The Authority's budget for 2023/24 is £47.624m. The quarter two revenue monitoring report shows a projected budget underspend of £0.394m as at 30 September 2023.

2023/24 Revenue Monitoring – Quarter 2 Position			
	Approved Budget 2023/24	Projected Outturn 2023/24	Variance 2023/24
<u>Financial Position</u>	£m	£m	£m
Fire Response and Protection	49.229	48.835	(0.394)
Capital Financing	3.465	3.465	-
Net Expenditure	52.694	52.300	(0.394)
Central Government Grant	18.514	18.514	-
Business Rates	6.187	6.187	-
Council Tax Precept	27.426	27.426	-
Central Grant and Precept Total	52.127	52.127	-
Appropriations (to) / from reserves	0.567	0.173	(0.394)

- 7.2 The budget is held by the Authority to provide financial resources to deliver operational fire response and protection. The Capital Financing budget comprises the revenue provision for repayment of borrowing, interest costs and investment income.
- 7.3 The overall forecast represents an underspend of £0.394m.
- 7.4 The forecast closing position on reserves for 2023/24 is £14.528m.

8. Medium Term Budget Pressures in Humberside

- 8.1 When calculating the medium-term budget projections for Humberside consideration has been given to a number of budget pressures including:
- (i) Pay and price increases;
 - (ii) Budget pressures;
 - (iii) Revenue implications of the capital programme.
- 8.2 **Pay and price increases** - Indicative budget forecasts for 2024/25 to 2028/29 reflect the impact of inflation on budgets wherever possible such as energy, business rates and rent increases along with known contract increases. In addition, estimates for future pay awards are at 4% in 2024/25 and 2% in future years.
- 8.3 **Budget pressures** - The MTRS also includes estimates of the impact of the valuation of the Firefighters' Pension Scheme and the triennial review of the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS).
- 8.4 **Revenue implications of the capital programme** – The most recent approved four-year capital programme is summarised in Section 10 below. The implications of this programme are fully reflected in the MTRS.

9. Medium Term Efficiencies and Productivity

- 9.1 Throughout the MTRS period efficiencies will continue to be delivered wherever possible, to sustain the investment in the fire service and balance the budget (See 11.2), for example:
- (i) Service Improvement Plan;
 - (ii) Non-pay savings (3% each year);
 - (iii) Savings through procurement through the continued use of regional and national frameworks;
 - (iv) Maximising income generation wherever possible.
- 9.2 The Authority is actively engaged in NFCC Efficiency and Productivity workstreams with our Chief Fire Officer/Chief Executive being the National NFCC Lead for Productivity and Efficiency. The Authority has produced a Productivity and Efficiency Plan which is published on the Authority's website. [Efficiency-and-Productivity-Plan-2023-24.pdf](#)

10. Capital Estimates and Financing

10.1 The following table provides a summary of the 5-year capital programme:

Capital Estimates	2024/25 £m	2025/26 £m	2026/27 £m	2027/28 £m	2028/29 £m	Total £m
Major and Minor Building Schemes	1.988	0.790	0.790	0.790	0.790	5.148
Information Technology	0.450	0.300	0.300	0.300	0.300	1.650
Vehicles and Equipment	1.936	2.392	2.350	1.298	0.503	8.479
Total	4.374	3.482	3.440	2.388	1.593	15.277

10.2 Key areas to note in the proposed programme are:

- (i) **Building Schemes** - Estates refurbishment programme based on operational requirements;
- (ii) **Information Technology** - the Service have a number of Improvement Schemes to deliver change and efficiency through transformation and costs relating to the implementation of the Emergency Services Network (ESN);
- (iii) **Vehicles and Equipment** - a rolling programme of vehicle replacement and programmes for upgrading equipment.

Capital Financing

Capital Estimates	2024/25 £m	2025/26 £m	2026/27 £m	2027/28 £m	2028/29 £m	Total £m
Forecast Expenditure	4.374	3.482	3.440	2.388	1.593	15.277
Financed by:						
Grants and Contributions	1.500	1.500	1.500	1.500	1.500	7.500
Prudential Borrowing	2.874	1.982	1.940	0.888	0.093	7.777
Total Financing	4.374	3.482	3.440	2.388	1.593	15.277

10.3 The capital financing approach is to use Prudential borrowing and identified revenue contributions and reserves where appropriate to fund the Capital Programme and as mentioned in paragraph 8.4 the revenue implications of this borrowing is fully reflected in the MTRS Budget Forecast.

11. Indicative Budget Forecasts 2024/25 to 2028/29

11.1 All the budget pressures, budget savings and funding assumptions outlined earlier in this Strategy are summarised below. Having considered the savings proposals and the availability of reserves to support the MTRS an important consideration is the precept proposal for 2024/25. The MTRS includes a precept increase of £4.99 built into the funding for 2024/25 and 2.99% in each of the future years.

11.2 The budget forecast position is set out in the following table:

MTRS Group Budget Forecast	2024/25 £m	2025/26 £m	2026/27 £m	2027/28 £m	2028/29 £m
Base budget	52.693	55.416	57.517	58.359	59.432
Budget pressures					
Pay Related Increases	3.568	0.561	0.640	0.934	0.951
Non-Pay Inflation	0.400	0.377	0.398	0.313	0.332
Budget pressures / (Savings)	(0.423)	1.250	0.050	0.050	0.050
Revenue Impact of Capital Financing	(0.546)	0.241	0.093	0.122	0.085
Total budget pressures	2.999	2.429	1.181	1.419	1.418
Efficiency Savings Requirement	(0.276)	(0.328)	(0.339)	(0.346)	(0.354)
Additional Savings Requirement	-	-	-	-	-
Net Budget Requirement	55.416	57.517	58.359	59.432	60.496
Central Government Grant Income	19.717	19.915	20.114	20.315	20.518
Business Rates Received from Local Authorities	6.021	6.021	6.021	6.021	6.021
Business Rates – Collection Fund Surplus / (Deficit)	(0.300)	(0.300)	(0.300)	(0.300)	(0.300)
Council Tax Precept Income	29.045	30.214	31.431	32.698	34.015
Council Tax Precept - Collection Fund Surplus / (Deficit)	0.450	0.450	0.450	0.450	0.450
Total Income	54.933	56.300	57.716	59.184	60.704
Funding Gap / (Surplus) Before Reserves	0.483	1.217	0.643	0.248	(0.208)
Planned use of reserves:					
Transfer (from)/to Earmarked reserves	(0.483)	(1.217)	(0.643)	(0.248)	0.208
Funding gap / (surplus) after use of reserves	-	-	-	-	-

11.3 The forecast budget is allocated as follows between Fire Service and Capital Financing.

Humberside Fire Authority	2024/25 £M	2025/26 £M	2026/27 £M	2027/28 £M	2028/29 £M
Fire Response and Protection	52.597	54.407	55.106	56.006	56.935
Capital Financing	2.819	3.110	3.253	3.426	3.561
Total	55.416	57.517	58.359	59.432	60.496

- 11.4 **Budget Monitoring arrangements** – the S.151 Officer confirms that the Authority has timely and robust monitoring arrangements. Management Accounts are reported to the Fire Authority and the Governance, Audit and Scrutiny Committee on a quarterly basis.

12. Reserves

Background information on Reserves

- 12.1 Sections 32 and 43 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 require billing and precepting authorities in England and Wales to have regard to the level of reserves needed for meeting estimated future expenditure when preparing budgets.
- 12.2 In establishing reserves, the Authority must comply with the Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom (the Code). The Chief Finance Officer is required as part of the budget setting process to provide a statement on the adequacy of reserves.
- 12.3 Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) guidance on Reserves and Balances (LAAP Bulletin No 77 November 2008) and the requirements of the Code suggests twice yearly reviews of reserves. By doing this, the visibility of reserves are increased and consideration of their use is placed at the forefront of the decision-making process. Reserves are cash backed balances, held on the balance sheet until they are spent or released for other purposes. As such, they can only be spent once, and are not part of the base budget.
- 12.4 In addition, CIPFA along with the Home Office recommended as good practice that Fire Authorities publish an Annual Reserve Strategy Statement. The statement provides an explanation for each reserve along with its value. It also includes a narrative explaining whether the current and projected level of reserves is appropriate, and if governance arrangements for reserves are adequate and appropriate.
- 12.5 The Authority's balance sheet reserves are summarised as follows:
- (i) **General Reserves** - a contingency for unexpected events or emergencies;
 - (ii) **Earmarked Reserves** - to meet known or predicted liabilities.
- 12.6 CIPFA guidance issued in June 2003 confirms that relevant bodies should make their own judgements on such matters, taking in to account relevant local circumstances and an assessment of risk and the advice of the Chief Finance Officer.

Reserves Strategy

- 12.7 The Authority must retain adequate reserves so that unexpected budget pressures can be met without adverse impact on the achievement of key objectives and council taxpayers. The Authority's policy for reserves and balances is based on a thorough understanding of the organisation's needs and risks. Part of this process is to give a clear explanation of the existing and proposed use of reserves and this is addressed in the paragraphs below.

General Reserve

- 12.8 The expected General Reserve at 1 April 2024 will be adjusted to £6.0m to match the identified level required following the risk assessment used to produce the Prudent General Minimum Level of Reserves following the end of 2023/24 financial year.

Earmarked Reserves

12.9 Earmarked Reserves represent funds which have been set aside by the Authority for specific purposes. The table below shows the overall strategy for use of reserves over the MTRS period.

MTRS Reserves Forecast	At 1 April 2024 £m	At 1 April 2025 £m	At 1 April 2026 £m	At 1 April 2027 £m	At 1 April 2028 £m	At 1 April 2029 £m
Earmarked Reserves						
Insurance	0.500	0.500	0.500	0.500	0.500	0.500
The Ark – National Flood Resilience Centre	1.000	1.000	-	-	-	-
Capital Programme Funding	3.410	3.660	3.510	3.360	3.210	3.060
Business Continuity	0.500	0.500	0.500	0.500	0.500	0.500
ESMCP	0.215	0.215	0.215	0.215	0.215	0.215
Strategic Transformation Fund	0.500	0.500	0.500	-	-	-
Service Improvement and Environment	0.030	0.030	0.030	0.030	0.030	0.030
Control Room	1.000	0.700	-	-	-	-
Pay and Prices	0.600	0.600	-	-	-	-
Total Earmarked Reserves	7.755	7.705	5.255	4.605	4.455	4.455
General Reserves	6.773	5.690	5.072	4.929	4.681	4.889
Total Reserves	14.528	13.395	10.327	9.534	9.136	9.194

12.10 The Authority retains £7.755m Earmarked reserves for the following purposes:

- Insurance – to meet potential uninsured losses;
- The Ark (National Flooding Resilience Centre) – to meet HFA contribution to the ARK project;
- Capital Programme Funding – funding for the Capital Programme to replace capital grant funding from the Home Office which has now ceased;
- Business Continuity – to meet any expenditure required in relation to maintaining the Service's resilience;
- Emergency Services Mobile Communication Programme (ESMCP) – to meet the costs of the ESMCP rollout;
- Strategic Transformation Fund – funding to support transformation initiatives;
- Service Improvement and Environment – to support environmental initiatives across the Service;
- Control Room – to meet costs in relation to the Control Room; and
- Pay and Prices – funding for pay and prices increases in excess of budget assumptions.

12.11 **Adequacy of Reserves** – the S.151 Officer confirms that the current reserves held by the Authority are adequate. The position on reserves will be kept under continuous review and will be reviewed again during 2024/25. Any material changes will be reported to the Authority.

13. Risk Assessment

- 13.1 The MTRS contains the most up to date information at the time of drafting, but the Authority's financial position is dynamic. A comprehensive financial risk assessment is undertaken for the revenue and capital budget setting process to ensure all risks and uncertainties affecting the Authority's financial position are identified. The Authority faces a number of significant financial pressures that could affect the position over the medium term. An assessment of the likelihood and impact of each risk and the management controls in place are shown in the following table:

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Risk Management
Pay awards and price inflation being higher than anticipated.	Possible	Medium	Budget based on best information available and set at a prudent level.
Failure to deliver planned savings.	Possible	Low	Revenue monitoring updates to the Fire Authority.
Industrial Action	Possible	High	Recruitment of contingency crews. Inclusion of funding in the General Reserve
Further reductions in funding included in the next Comprehensive Spending Review and an unfavourable review of funding formula.	Possible	High	Balance on the General Reserve maintained at the Prudent General Minimum; forward planning; regular monitoring.
Future council tax precept rises limited by excessiveness principles determined by the Government.	Likely	Medium	Balance on the General Reserve maintained at the Prudent General Minimum; forward planning.
Costs associated with the outcome of the national legal challenge to the Firefighters' Pension Scheme (2015) transition arrangements are not met centrally by the Home Office.	Possible	Medium	Balance on the General Reserve maintained at a Prudent General Minimum; close budget monitoring; annual review of budget and MTRS; existing Firefighters Pension Fund arrangements require the Home Office to balance the deficit on the Fund each year through a top-up grant.

- 13.2 **Robustness of Estimates** - the S.151 Officer confirms that the budget estimates have been compiled on a robust and prudent basis.

14. Financial Resilience

Sensitivity analysis

- 14.1 The MTRS refresh is being undertaken in a more uncertain environment as significant inflationary pressures impact the economy.
- 14.2 Funding assumptions both in relation to local and national funding are likely to cause material changes late on in the planning process. This cannot be avoided but needs to be recognised.
- 14.3 The current MTRS assumes pay awards at 4% in 2024/25 and 2% in future years.

- (i) Pay makes up circa 85% of the total net spend which remains one of our single largest assumptions. The table below shows the impact of differing pay awards in terms of sensitivity. Each additional 1% will cost an additional £0.4m per year.
- (ii) The following information has been received from external sources around medium-term inflation rates based on their in-depth analysis of the current market:

Budget	Increase 2024/25 %	Reason
Insurances	10.0	Renewals due and hardening of market
Waste, Cleaning, Building Maintenance	5.0	Contract price increases
Electricity	5.0	Supply and demand on global market
Gas	5.0	Supply and demand on global market
Water	5.0	Historical rate of increase
Rates	6.8	Inflation
Fuel	5.0	Forecast oil price
IT	10.0	Shortage in skilled labour and higher shipping costs

- (iii) The uncertain environment in relation to income continues to be a challenge in relation to medium term financial planning. The following sensitivity analysis has been undertaken across three scenarios ahead of the spending review across both central government and local funding streams:

Medium Term Resilience

14.4 The following six indicators have been developed by CIPFA to demonstrate the medium-term financial resilience of Fire Authorities. These indicators allow benchmarking with other Authorities and organisations and provide an overall assessment of financial resilience.

14.5 Funding gap as a percentage of Net Revenue Expenditure (NRE) over the MTRS period - Authorities need to have a clear estimate of their funding gap over the Medium-term Resource Strategy.

	2024/25 £m	2025/26 £m	2026/27 £m	2027/28 £m	2028/29 £m
NRE	55.692	57.845	58.698	59.778	60.850
Estimated Funding Gap	0.759	1.545	0.982	0.594	0.146
Gap as a % of NRE	1.36%	2.67%	1.67%	0.99%	0.24%
Savings Identified	0.276	0.328	0.339	0.346	0.354
Additional Savings Required	-	-	-	-	-
Unidentified Gap as a % of NRE	0.87%	2.10%	1.10%	0.41%	(0.34%)

14.6 Savings delivered as a percentage of planned savings – Authorities need to be sure that savings plans are effective and planned savings are delivered.

	2019/20 £m	2020/21 £m	2021/22 £m	2022/23 £m	2023/24 £m
MTRS Savings Planned	0.658	-	0.127	0.240	0.280
MTRS Savings Achieved	0.658	-	0.127	0.240	0.280
% of Savings Achieved	100.00%	-	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%

14.7 Over/underspends relative to Net Expenditure – It is important that Authorities keep over/underspending under control and that actual expenditure is as close as possible to the levels planned.

	2019/20 £m	2020/21 £m	2021/22 £m	2022/23 £m	2023/24* £m
NRE	46.343	48.352	45.290	47.614	52.127
Over/(Under)spend	(0.120)	(0.571)	(0.991)	(0.448)	(0.394)
Over/(Under)spend as a % of NRE	(0.26%)	(1.18%)	(2.19%)	(0.94%)	(0.76%)

*estimated position

- 14.8 Useable Reserves as a percentage of Net Revenue Budget – Reserves allow for periods of uncertainty to be managed and healthy levels of useable reserves are an important safety net to support financial stability.

	2019/20 £m	2020/21 £m	2021/22 £m	2022/23 £m	2023/24 £m	2024/25 £m	2025/26 £m	2026/27 £m	2027/28 £m	2028/29 £m
NRE	46.343	48.352	45.290	47.614	52.694	55.416	57.517	58.359	59.432	60.496
Resource Reserves										
General	5.251	5.758	6.373	6.946	6.173	5.690	5.072	4.929	4.681	4.889
Earmarked	4.938	5.173	7.408	7.865	8.355	7.705	5.255	4.605	4.455	4.305
Resource Reserves as a % of NRE	22.0%	22.6%	30.4%	31.1%	27.6%	24.2%	18.0%	16.3%	15.4%	15.2%
Change in %	(1.0%)	0.6%	7.8%	0.7%	(3.5%)	(3.4%)	(6.2%)	(1.7%)	(0.9%)	(0.2%)

- 14.9 Council Tax as a percentage of Income – This shows the reliance of Fire and Rescue Services on core grants and potential impact changes in core grant funding could have on the financial sustainability of the Authority.

	2019/20 £m	2020/21 £m	2021/22 £m	2022/23 £m	2023/24 £m	2024/25 £m	2025/26 £m	2026/27 £m	2027/28 £m	2028/29 £m
Precept	22.993	23.817	24.148	25.312	27.055	29.045	30.214	31.431	32.698	34.015
Total Financing	43.575	45.269	45.163	47.614	52.127	54.933	56.300	57.716	59.184	60.704
Precept as a % of Total Financing	52.8%	52.6%	53.5%	53.2%	51.9%	52.9%	53.7%	54.5%	55.2%	56.0%

- 14.10 The Cost of Borrowing as a percentage of Net Revenue Expenditure – Borrowing commitments are long term and must be funded from ongoing revenue budgets. This table shows the amount of revenue funding committed to meet current and future borrowing commitments.

	2019/20 £m	2020/21 £m	2021/22 £m	2022/23 £m	2023/24 £m	2024/25 £m	2025/26 £m	2026/27 £m	2027/28 £m	2028/29 £m
NRE	46.343	48.352	45.290	47.614	52.694	55.416	57.517	58.359	59.432	60.496
Borrowing	15.003	13.618	16.984	18.169	16.669	16.828	17.000	17.000	17.000	17.000
MRP	1.209	0.700	0.792	0.818	0.955	1.005	1.219	1.315	1.429	1.547
Interest	0.658	0.621	0.621	0.358	0.510	0.314	0.391	0.438	0.497	0.513
Cost of Borrowing as a % of NRE	4.0%	2.7%	3.1%	2.5%	2.8%	2.4%	2.8%	3.0%	3.2%	3.4%
Level of Debt	15.003	13.618	16.984	18.169	16.669	16.828	17.000	17.000	17.000	17.000
Level of Debt as a % of NRE	32.4%	28.2%	37.5%	38.2%	31.6%	30.4%	29.6%	29.1%	28.6%	28.1%

15. Conclusion

- 15.1 The overall financial position for Humberside Fire Authority is sustainable over the medium term. However, this is dependent on annual council tax increases of £4.99 on a Band D property in 2024/25 and the use of £1.7m from reserves during 2024/25 and 2025/26. The Authority's overall financial position will be reviewed on an on-going basis.
- 15.2 The MTRS sets out how all five years will be financed and general reserves are set at the level identified in the Prudent Minimum General Reserve assessment, estimated at £6.0m for 2024/25.

DRAFT

Percentage of Core Spending Power (Revenue)

Fire and Rescue Authority	General Fund £m	Earmarked reserves £m	Total resource reserves £m	Capital reserves £m	2021/22 Core Spending Power £m	Resource reserves as a percentage of Core Spending Power %
Tyne and Wear	3.9	35.2	39.2	1.6	50.7	77%
Leicestershire	2.6	19.2	21.8	0	37.1	59%
Devon and Somerset	5.3	40.5	45.8	0	79.7	57%
Kent	3.7	38.2	41.9	7.9	75	56%
Bedfordshire	2.4	13.5	15.9	0.7	31.4	51%
Cheshire	2.3	18.9	21.2	1.6	45.2	47%
Hereford and Worcester	1.5	14.2	15.8	5.5	33.3	47%
Merseyside	3	26.1	29.1	10.4	63.8	46%
West Yorkshire	5	32.4	37.4	0.1	84.9	44%
Hampshire	2.5	33.3	35.8	0	0	43%
West Midlands	5.8	36.9	42.8	2.3	100.9	42%
East Sussex	2	15	16.9	6	40.2	42%
Dorset and Wiltshire	2.8	20.6	23.4	0	58.8	40%
Staffordshire	1.9	15.3	17.2	0	43.2	40%
Cleveland	1.6	8.8	10.3	1.2	28	37%
South Yorkshire	5	13.7	18.7	0.7	52.9	35%
Berkshire	2.3	9.9	12.2	0	35.5	34%
Lancashire	6.5	10.8	17.2	19.7	57.6	30%
Humberside	6.4	7.4	13.7	0	45.6	30%
Derbyshire	1.9	9.6	11.5	2.4	39.6	29%
Cambridgeshire	2.1	7	9.1	3.9	30.9	29%
Avon	1.5	10.7	12.2	7.1	45.4	27%
Durham and Darlington	1.5	6.2	7.7	0	30.1	26%
North Yorkshire	1.1	6.9	8	0	32.4	25%
Shropshire	1.6	4.2	5.8	11.5	23.4	25%
Essex	4.4	13.5	17.8	9.7	75.4	24%
Nottinghamshire	5	5.7	10.7	0.3	43.8	24%
Buckinghamshire	1.5	5	6.5	0	28.9	23%
Northamptonshire	3	1.9	4.9	0.6	24.1	20%

**EXTENSION OF STRATEGIC PLAN AND COMMUNITY RISK MANAGEMENT
PLAN (CRMP) 2021-24**

1. SUMMARY

- 1.1 The closely aligned CRMP and Strategic Plan have a three-year lifecycle, which is due to end on 31 March 2024.
- 1.2 The CRMP, which is a public facing strategic document, mandated through the National Framework, describes in detail the risks that are prevalent in our community, alongside the methods and resources we apply to mitigate those risks.
- 1.3 The Strategic Plan (Appendix 1) provides the focus for effectively and efficiently delivering services for our communities, and supporting and valuing the people we employ. It is published on the [HFRS Website](#) alongside the outcomes we expect from strategic objectives and the outcome measures that are in place.
- 1.4 It is recognised by the Strategic Leadership Team (SLT) that planning for the next three-year period, 2024-27, will need to take account of the potential for significant sector wide changes arising during 2024. Not least the anticipated publication of the Government White Paper 'Reforming our Fire and Rescue Service', the subsequent potential for revision of the National Framework, the impact of any change of Government following a General Election and as yet unknown impacts from local governance changes such as devolution.
- 1.5 To provide stability and consistency in 2024, which Members are aware is also a HMICFRS Service Inspection year, it is proposed that the current Strategic Plan and CRMP will remain in place after 1 April 2024, and potentially up to the end of that calendar year.

2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 It is recommended that the current Strategic Plan 2021-24 and Community Risk Management Plan 2021-24 remain in place after 1 April 2024, potentially up to the end of the 2024 calendar year.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The CRMP, which is a public facing strategic document, mandated through the National Framework, describes in detail the risks that are prevalent in our community, alongside the methods and resources we apply to mitigate those risks. Further guidance regarding content and structure is provided through the National Fire Chiefs Council CRMP Strategic Framework and a Community Risk Planning National Fire Standard. The CRMP is published on the [HFRS Website](#).
- 3.2 The Strategic Plan provides the focus for effectively and efficiently delivering services for our communities, and supporting and valuing the people we employ. It is published on the [HFRS Website](#) alongside the outcomes we expect from strategic objectives and the outcome measures that are in place.

4. REPORT DETAIL

- 4.1 The three-year cycle for the Strategic Plan and CRMP includes an annual review of both documents. Proposed changes are subjected to internal and external

consultation, and suggestions for other changes are encouraged. An annual progress report is made to Members.

- 4.2 The Strategic Plan and CRMP were last reviewed in 2023, following consultation several revisions were made to the CRMP and were reported to Members in June. No changes were required to be made to the Strategic Plan at that time.
- 4.3 It is intended to maintain the current Strategic Plan and CRMP during 2024, in conjunction with preparing our new 2024/27 plans, for consultation and publication.
- During calendar year 2024 it is not intended to change current Strategic Objective Statements within the Strategic Plan, they still align to the strategic direction of the Service pending any external influences. The underpinning Outcome Expectations and Outcome Measures will however be subjected to internal consultation and review to ensure they continue to reflect the expectations of our employees.
 - Revisions will be made to the CRMP during 2024, to ensure current and predictable risks and mitigations are documented, and to improve accessibility.
 - In conjunction, work will be undertaken to produce a new Strategic Plan and CRMP for the period 2024/27, during 2024. This work will take account of any external influences arising from the anticipated publication of the Government White Paper, subsequent revision of the National Framework, potential outcomes from a General Election, any progression of devolution discussions, as well as community feedback as a result of consultations.

Financial Implications

- 4.4 Effective financial planning arrangements are an enabler for efficiency in service delivery and support in alignment with the CRMP and Strategic Plan.

5. EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 An equality impact analysis (Ref No. EIA/CA/14) has been completed and there are no identified negative impacts on any protected characteristic groups.

6. CONCLUSION

- 6.1 Members should take assurance from the process used to review and develop the Strategic Plan and CRMP.
- 6.2 To provide stability and consistency in 2024, which Members are aware is also a HMICFRS Service Inspection year, it is proposed that the current Strategic Plan and CRMP will remain in place after 1 April 2024, and potentially up to the end of that calendar year.

Steve Duffield
Area Manager of Service Improvement

Officer Contact

Jamie Morris – Head of Corporate Assurance

☎ 07970969425

✉ jmorris@humbersidefire.gov.uk

Gareth Naidoo – Senior Corporate Assurance Officer

☎ 07814 281092

✉ gnaidoo@humbersidefire.gov.uk

Background Papers

The Strategic Plan and CRMP 2021-24 are available on the [HFRS Website](#)

Glossary/Abbreviations

CRMP	Community Risk Management Plan
NFCC	National Fire Chiefs Council

Our Mission...

Safer communities, safer firefighters.

Keeping communities in the Humber area safe, keeping our firefighters safe.

Contributing to the emergency response capabilities of the UK.



HUMBERSIDE
Fire & Rescue Service



What we must do well

- 1.1** Continue to complete planning arrangements and interventions to reduce fire related fatalities or casualties.
- 1.2** Effectively deliver activities to prevent fires and other emergency incidents.
- 1.3** Protect the public from fires and other risks by delivering fire regulation, legislation and protection activities.
- 1.4** Efficiently manage our resources to meet current risk.



How we support our communities

- 2.1** We understand our community and the risks they face.
- 2.2** We help the public and businesses to stay safe.
- 2.3** We respond quickly and effectively to emergency incidents.
- 2.4** We treat everyone in an open and fair manner.



We value and support the people we employ

- 3.1** We encourage, attract and retain a diverse range of people to help us provide the best service.
- 3.2** We develop and cultivate a highly trained, competent workforce.
- 3.3** We promote our principles and expected behaviours, and are ethical, transparent and accountable.
- 3.4** We ensure the health, safety and wellbeing of our staff.



We efficiently manage the Service

- 4.1** We deliver sound financial control and resilience.
- 4.2** We make appropriate use of public money and deliver value for money.
- 4.3** We promote good governance and ensure openness, transparency and accessibility.

**Strategic Plan
2021 - 2024**

WORKFORCE PLAN UPDATE

1. SUMMARY

- 1.1 In March 2023 the Service Workforce Plan was updated reflecting current staffing levels and the retirement profile. It also reflects how the Service meets its obligations under the Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP) and optimises the use of the 24-hour shift system.
- 1.2 This Workforce Plan lays out the detail of the Service's position as at 31 March 2023 in relation to the Establishment, our vacancies and recruitment plan with consideration for the potential retirement and subsequent resulting recruitment. The document is designed to be a "working document" to enable continual evolution as the Service progresses but is formally updated on an annual basis on 31 March.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 It is recommended that Members note the content of this update and be assured that the Service regularly reviews and addresses workforce planning needs through both long-term planning and dynamic response as required.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 A Workforce Planning meeting is held every quarter attended by all Heads of Function to review local planned and unplanned attrition rates and local context and developments. The Tactical Leadership Team (TLT) meets on a monthly basis and, if necessary, is also able to consider workforce planning matters which are occurring dynamically and ensure timely response to addressing shortfalls and redistributing resources, should this be necessary.
- 3.2 The Postings and Transfers Board meeting also meets monthly to consider and implement movements around the Service in accordance with service delivery needs. Again, this forum is able to respond dynamically to any emerging needs and potential shortfalls, etc. During this reporting period, the Postings and Transfers policy has also been updated to further reflect the needs of the organisation. A Crewing Meeting, attended by the Executive Director of People & Development, Area Manager Service Delivery, Head of HR and a Service Delivery Group Manager is held bi-monthly and is used to support and inform the Postings & Transfers Board meetings.
- 3.3. All information is triangulated with station and section profiles, the retirement profile and financial budgeting information.

4. REPORT DETAIL

- 4.1 Progress over 1 April 2023 to 30 September 2023 includes:
- 17 temporary On-Call to Full Time Firefighting contracts issued whilst further permanent recruitment activity takes place.
 - 13 new Full Time Probationer Firefighters (externally recruited) included 3 female recruits posted to station in July 2023.
 - 3 external Full Time Firefighters transferring into the Service from 1st April 2023.

- 16 new Full Time Probationer Firefighters (externally recruited) included 4 female recruits beginning their training course from September 2023.
 - Ongoing positive action initiatives to collect electronic expressions of interest enabling HFRS to target applications from all under-represented groups.
 - Positive action 'roadshows' around Hull, East Riding, North Lincolnshire and North-East Lincolnshire Council areas ahead of the latest Full Time Firefighter recruitment drive.
 - The implementation of further positive action programmes (Rookie Reds) to equip female applicants to undertake the selection process with more confidence.
 - Use of the expressions of interest data to target individuals regarding the option to apply to become an On-Call Firefighter in rural areas where it is more geographically challenging to recruit in accordance with the five-minute response time.
 - Recruitment and Promotion Processes during 2023 include:
 - Executive Director of Finance and Section 151 Officer Process – Advertised July 2023 – 1 appointed
 - Group Manager (GM) Pipeline – Advertised February 2023 - 2 appointed
 - Station Manager (SM) Pipeline – Advertised February 2023 – 3 appointed
 - Watch Manager (WM) Pipeline – Advertised March 2023 – 9 appointed
 - Crew Manager (CM) Pipeline – Advertised April 2023 – 12 appointed
- 4.2 Talent Pipeline promotion processes have been replaced by the Service's new Portfolio promotion process which will provide a steady supply of individuals ready for promotion to Station, Watch and Crew Manager.
- 4.3 Promotion and recruitment cycles are planned throughout the year to align with retirement profiles and actual leavers to better anticipate skills and capacity gaps.
- 4.4 All operational roles are advertised internally and externally to allow for improved diversity balance and the intake of fresh talent.
- 4.5 All roles are advertised via Asian Fire Service Association (AFSA) and WFS (Women in the Fire Service) to encourage applications from under-represented groups.
- 4.6 All roles are also advertised via websites who specialise in ex-military candidates seeking civilian employment as they leave the armed forces.

Financial Implications

- 4.7 The effective establishment control and detailed understanding of our biggest asset; our Workforce, is essential in the effective management of our financial resources, ensuring value for money for local communities.

Communication Actions

- 4.10 The Plan will be communicated and explained widely across the Workforce and will be published on the Service's website.

Legal Implications

- 4.11 Effective workforce planning gives a better understanding of the workforce position, which better enables the Service to manage its legal obligations; in this context, with particular regard to our Public Sector Equality Duty and employment legislation. We will also be better equipped to ensure we meet our statutory obligations and CRMP to the communities we serve in providing a safe and effective Fire and Rescue Service.

Risk Implications

- 4.12 The lack of effective workforce planning can present significant corporate risks if we do not have the right staff in the right place with the right skills at the right time. The development of this Plan presents mitigation to that risk.

5. EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 There is no requirement to carry out an equality impact analysis as this report does not relate to a policy or service delivery change.

6. CONCLUSION

- 6.1 Members are requested to note the content of this update and be assured that the Service regularly reviews and addresses workforce planning needs through both long-term planning and dynamic response as required.

Christine Cooper
Executive Director of People and Development

Officer Contact

Anne Stott - Head of HR

✉ astott@humbersidefire.gov.uk

Background Papers

None

Abbreviations

ACFO	Assistant Chief Fire Officer
AM	Area Manager
AFSA	Asian Fire Service Association
CFO	Chief Fire Officer
CM	Crew Manager
CRMP	Community Risk Management Plan
DCFO	Deputy Chief Fire Officer
FF	Firefighter
GM	Group Manager
SM	Station Manager
TLT	Tactical Leadership Team
WFS	Women in the Fire Service
WM	Watch Manager

BULLYING, HARASSMENT AND DISCRIMINATION INTERNAL AUDIT

1. SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report outlines the outcome of the internal audit assurance review into Bullying, Harassment and Discrimination within the Service conducted by TIAA.
- 1.2 The internal audit conducted by TIAA gave an overall assessment of 'reasonable assurance', the second highest level of assurance during an audit and identified areas of good practice in relation to regular communication on the Zero Tolerance campaign being reinforced through the staff magazine/bulletin, which is published every fortnight.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 It is recommended that the Fire Authority note the details of this report and good practice outlined in the audit report (Appendix 1).

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The TIAA audit considered the action taken by the Service to minimise instances of bullying, harassment and discrimination, and the reporting and investigation processes. The review also considered promotion of the Zero Tolerance campaign.
- 3.2 The Audit provided assurance to the Governance, Audit and Scrutiny Committee that there are appropriate practices in place to minimise instances of bullying, harassment and discrimination within the Service.

4. REPORT DETAIL

- 4.1 The audit made a number of findings which are detailed in the attached report (Appendix 1).

Key strategic findings include:

- Staff inductions and regular briefings from the Chief Fire Officer cover the Service's position on bullying, harassment and discrimination. There is also a designated contact/ Freedom to Speak Up Guardian, however they are yet to be trained as a Freedom to Speak Up Guardian.
 - Complaints relating to bullying, harassment and discrimination are recorded centrally for monitoring purposes and are maintained by the Human Resources Team. Two open complaints/ cases were seen to not have been dealt with in a timely manner.
 - All employees are required to complete mandatory training on bullying, harassment, and discrimination. Testing showed 95.3% of employees have completed this to date.
- 4.2 TIAA gave 'reasonable assurance' to this audit process and made four recommendations.

5. EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 There is no requirement to carry out an equality impact analysis as this report does not relate to a policy or service delivery change.

6. CONCLUSION

- 6.1 Members should take assurance by the TIAA audit on action being taken by the Service to minimise bullying, harassment and discrimination.

Christine Cooper
Executive Director of People & Development

Officer Contact

Anne Stott – Head of HR
✉ astott@humbersidefire.gov.uk

Background Papers

None



Internal Audit






Humberside Fire & Rescue

Assurance Review of Bullying, Harassment and Discrimination

2023/24

August 2023

Executive Summary

OVERALL ASSESSMENT		KEY STRATEGIC FINDINGS									
<div><p>The diagram shows a central yellow circle labeled 'REASONABLE ASSURANCE' surrounded by a blue ring with the text 'Adequate & effective governance, risk and control processes'. To the right, a vertical bar indicates four levels of assurance: SUBSTANTIAL ASSURANCE (green), REASONABLE ASSURANCE (yellow), LIMITED ASSURANCE (orange), and NO ASSURANCE (red).</p></div>		<div><div><p>Staff inductions and regular briefings from the Chief Fire Officer cover the Service's position on bullying, harassment and discrimination. There is also a designated contact/ Freedom to Speak Up Guardian, however they are yet to be trained as a Freedom to Speak Up Guardian.</p></div><div><p>Complaints relating to bullying, harassment and discrimination are recorded centrally for monitoring purposes and are maintained by the Human Resources Team. Two open complaints/ cases were seen to not have been dealt with in a timely manner.</p></div><div><p>All employees are required to complete mandatory training on bullying, harassment, and discrimination. Testing showed 95.3% of employees have completed this to date.</p></div></div>									
ASSURANCE OVER KEY STRATEGIC RISK / OBJECTIVE		GOOD PRACTICE IDENTIFIED									
<p>Public confidence in Working Culture: As a result of the identification of unacceptable cultural behaviours within the emergency services sector, reported through independent inquiries, whistleblowing and media platforms, public perception is affected which may result in reputational damage to the organisation.</p>		<div><div><p>Regular communication on the Zero Tolerance campaign are reinforced through the staff magazine/ bulletin, which is published every fortnight. In the most recent editions, the different support routes available to staff members who may be facing bullying, harassment and victimisation are listed.</p></div></div>									
SCOPE		ACTION POINTS									
<p>The review considered the action taken to minimise instances of bullying, harassment and discrimination, the reporting and investigation processes. The review also considered promotion of the No Tolerance campaign.</p>		<table><tr><th>Urgent</th><th>Important</th><th>Routine</th><th>Operational</th></tr><tr><td>0</td><td>3</td><td>1</td><td>0</td></tr></table>		Urgent	Important	Routine	Operational	0	3	1	0
Urgent	Important	Routine	Operational								
0	3	1	0								

Assurance - Key Findings and Management Action Plan (MAP)

Rec.	Risk Area	Finding	Recommendation	Priority	Management Comments	Implementation Timetable (dd/mm/yy)	Responsible Officer (Job Title)
1	Directed	<p>The case tracker / spreadsheet was thoroughly reviewed as part of the audit. This contained data only from September 2022 as, due to a cyber-attack in mid-2022, previous cases were lost.</p> <p>There are two current cases ongoing. For one of the cases, this is at a stage 2 hearing, but no details have been provided on the tracker as to whether a stage 2 hearing took place. Discussions with the Head of HR however confirmed this has taken place with the stage 2 outcome being awaited, however the tracker is yet to be updated.</p> <p>In the second case, this is due a stage 3 appeal hearing. It is however not clear whether this has taken place as it has not been updated on the tracker. The Head of HR also confirmed this is yet to take place.</p> <p>In both cases, the total number of days investigating and progressing between stages have totalled 230 days. Timescales were not strictly adhered to in both cases. It was confirmed, these are two sensitive and complex cases.</p>	It be ensured that reported complaints are dealt with in a more timely manner to minimise potential stress to all those involved.	2	<p>A new approach has been recently implemented whereby upon receipt of a matter, the dates for the whole process will be provisionally scheduled into the appropriate calendars and the individual advised accordingly. In this way, the Service will be compliant with the timescales set out in its policy and the individual can make any necessary arrangements in advance.</p> <p>Furthermore, it will ensure that the appropriate hearing officers are also available, taking into account rota days, etc.</p> <p>Whilst every effort will continue to be made to identify a convenient date for the individual on which to hear their matter, in order to ensure the timescales are adhered to, it may not now be possible to schedule meetings on the days on which the individual is on duty/at work. There will therefore be a level of flexibility required by the</p>	01/09/23	Head of HR

PRIORITY GRADINGS

1 **URGENT** Fundamental control issue on which action should be taken immediately.

2 **IMPORTANT** Control issue on which action should be taken at the earliest opportunity.

3 **ROUTINE** Control issue on which action should be taken.

Rec.	Risk Area	Finding	Recommendation	Priority	Management Comments	Implementation Timetable (dd/mm/yy)	Responsible Officer (Job Title)
					<p>individual themselves in terms of their availability.</p> <p>Should the matter be resolved during the early stages, the dates can then be removed from the various calendars.</p> <p>It should be noted, however, that in the event that matters should be as complex and as sensitive as those reviewed by the auditor, involving the interviewing of a number of individuals, there may still be a need to extend the timescales, but this will continue to be done with the prior knowledge and agreement of the individual concerned.</p> <p>The Unions have been apprised of this approach and are supportive of the same.</p>		
3	Delivery	There are no formal reports to the Senior Leadership Team on bullying, harassment, and discrimination. Discussions with the Head of Human Resources (HR) confirmed updates on cases, trends and overall information and data relating to this subject matter is verbally	The Senior Leadership Team be provided with regular updates on bullying, harassment and discrimination cases including actions taken and outcomes incorporating	2	Formal reporting to SLT will now take place on a quarterly basis, with trends, patterns, outcomes and actions taken forming part of the report. Monthly	01/09/23	Head of HR

PRIORITY GRADINGS

1 **URGENT** Fundamental control issue on which action should be taken immediately.

2 **IMPORTANT** Control issue on which action should be taken at the earliest opportunity.

3 **ROUTINE** Control issue on which action should be taken.

Rec.	Risk Area	Finding	Recommendation	Priority	Management Comments	Implementation Timetable (dd/mm/yy)	Responsible Officer (Job Title)
		shared and discussed with the Executive Director of People and Development at the People and Development Directorate Board meeting and through regular catchups. As these are verbally discussed they are not formally documented or minuted. The Head of HR confirmed work is underway to ensure that formal reporting is made to the Senior Leadership Team.	external complaints to the service, including any trends.		summaries of all ER matters will also be provided to SLT. The meetings have been scheduled into the diary, with the first being scheduled for Wednesday 6 September.		
4	Delivery	It was confirmed that the newly appointed Freedom to Speak Up Guardian has not attended relevant training since assuming the role. Discussions with the Freedom to Speak Up Guardian confirmed accessing training for this role has proved challenging. They have however joined the Fire Service Speak Up working group/ network led by Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue Service in order to access training for Guardians.	Training for the Freedom to Speak Up Guardian be undertaken and completed as soon as it is practicable to ensure consistency is delivered and to ensure the Freedom to Speak Up Guardian understands speaking up and its importance in creating an environment in which people are supported to deliver their best.	2			

PRIORITY GRADINGS

1 **URGENT** Fundamental control issue on which action should be taken immediately.

2 **IMPORTANT** Control issue on which action should be taken at the earliest opportunity.

3 **ROUTINE** Control issue on which action should be taken.

Rec.	Risk Area	Finding	Recommendation	Priority	Management Comments	Implementation Timetable (dd/mm/yy)	Responsible Officer (Job Title)
2	Directed	Exit surveys are completed for staff members when they leave the Service via an online link to complete following their resignation. They are also offered a face-to-face meeting with their Line Manager. Discussions with the Head of HR confirmed leavers are further offered the opportunity to speak with a different Line Manager, a member of HR or a member of the Senior Leadership Team. Data obtained from the meetings are then fed into a spreadsheet, which is used to show and monitor trends. This data is said to be reviewed by the HR Team and discussed informally with the Executive Director of People and Development. This is usually led by the Head of HR. A review of the exit form showed the different reasons for leaving included workplace issues and conflict with others and managers. Whilst there is no specific list for bullying, harassment, and victimisation, it was confirmed that where a leaver selects their reason as workplace issues or conflicts with others/ managers, this is picked up by the HR Team for further investigation.	The Exit Feedback Form be strengthened to include bullying, harassment, and discrimination as specific examples of workplace issues that are the reason for leaving.	3	<p>This has been actioned and the revised form is now live.</p> <p>Bullying, harassment and discrimination are now three separate categories, with discrimination have the following, additional subcategories:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Age - Disability - Gender reassignment - Marriage and civil partnership - Pregnancy and maternity - Race - Religion or belief - Sex - Sexual orientation 	03/08/23	Head of HR

PRIORITY GRADINGS

1 **URGENT** Fundamental control issue on which action should be taken immediately.

2 **IMPORTANT** Control issue on which action should be taken at the earliest opportunity.

3 **ROUTINE** Control issue on which action should be taken.

Operational - Effectiveness Matter (OEM) Action Plan

Ref	Risk Area	Finding	Suggested Action	Management Comments
No Operational Effectiveness Matters were identified.				

ADVISORY NOTE

Operational Effectiveness Matters need to be considered as part of management review of procedures.

Findings



Directed Risk:

Failure to properly direct the service to ensure compliance with the requirements of the organisation.

Ref	Expected Key Risk Mitigation		Effectiveness of arrangements	Cross Reference to MAP	Cross Reference to OEM
GF	Governance Framework	There is a documented process instruction which accords with the relevant regulatory guidance, Financial Instructions and Scheme of Delegation.	In place	-	-
RM	Risk Mitigation	The documented process aligns with the mitigating arrangements set out in the corporate risk register.	In place	-	-
C	Compliance	Compliance with statutory, regulatory and policy requirements is demonstrated, with action taken in cases of identified non-compliance.	Partially In place	1, & 2	-

Other Findings



The Professional Standards Dignity at Work Policy (anti Bullying and Harassment Procedure) in place was last reviewed in October 2022. The Policy is designed to provide support to members of staff who have been the subject of bullying and harassment to take action, access support and to ensure that all staff within the service understand their roles and responsibility in relation to this subject area. The policy further acts as a piece of guidance to managers involved in cases of bullying and harassment by defining their roles and responsibilities, setting out process to be followed and outlining support available to staff. Key areas covered within the policy include: Definitions of harassment, victimisation, discrimination and bullying; The procedure for managing bullying and harassment complaints (stage 1: informal procedure and stage 2: formal procedure); training, follow up and on-going resolution; and monitoring and evaluation.


Associated policies/ documents used jointly with the Professional Standards Dignity at Work Policy include the Professional Standards Grievance Procedure Policy, Professional Standards Whistleblowing Policy, Professional Standards Disciplinary Procedures Policy, Corporate Communication, Social Media and Events Policy, Professional Standards Mediation Policy, Corporate Equality and Inclusion Policy, Professional Standards Exits From the Service Policy, and the Equality Impact Analysis.

All policies were seen during the audit and it was confirmed that they were in date.





Overall responsibility for the management of bullying, harassment, and discrimination within HFRS sits with the Executive Director of People and Development. This role is supported by other members of staff such as the Head of Human Resources, Head of Occupational Health and Wellbeing, Workplace Wellbeing Manager and Corporate Communications Supervisor and different teams such as the Occupational Health Team, Training, Corporate Assurance Team and Organisational Development Team. The Professional Standards Dignity at Work Policy (anti Bullying and Harassment Procedure) further sets out the roles and responsibilities of all employees including Line Managers and Trade Unions.


Other Findings


- 


The following risk is a strategic risk on the Corporate Risk Register; "Public Confidence in Working Culture - As a result of the identification of unacceptable cultural behaviours within the emergency services sector, reported through independent inquiries, whistleblowing and media platforms, public perception is affected which may result in reputational damage to the organisation".

Mitigating controls include development of service policies such as Dignity at Work (anti bullying and harassment); Disciplinary Procedures Policy, Implementation of the Core Code of Ethics (including policy statements, eLearning & PDR integration); Commissioning of independent cultural review and the Zero Tolerance campaign. This risk is reviewed quarterly and was last reviewed in June 2023.
- 

Complaints/ cases of bullying, harassment and discrimination are logged on a spreadsheet/ case tracker and on individual employee personnel files. The spreadsheet/ case tracker is used to record details of the specific cases, actions taken, to monitor trends and is also used to view case summary including outcomes. Testing identified this is only accessible to the HR Team including the Director of People and Development. Permissions are sought for any other member of staff wanting to view this spreadsheet outside of those who already have permissions
- 

It was confirmed that Service Partners attend monthly district performance meetings with Station Managers, chaired by Group Manager (GMs), where topics relating to bullying, harassment and discrimination are discussed with workplace standards reiterated and reinforced and trends discussed. This forms part of the standard agenda discussed. The Freedom to Speak Up Guardian has also attended some of these district meetings to discuss their role. These monthly meetings are supported by the monthly district GM meetings that is attended by the Head of HR where similar items are discussed. It was also confirmed that there are regular HR engagement meetings where the Head of HR meets with On Call Watchers and Full time Watchers at their drill nights where discussions are held to ensure the working environment is free from bullying, harassment and victimisation and to ensuring that all employees are treated fairly and with respect.
- 

As part of induction programme for newly appointed/ recruited members of staff, bullying, harassment and discrimination is discussed. This ensures that new staff are aware of the Core Code of Ethics for the Authority ensuring that this is applied appropriately. New employees are also directed to relevant key policies such as the Professional Standards Dignity at Work Policy (anti Bullying and Harrassment Procedure) and the Professional Standards Grievance Procedure Policy, so they understand their responsibilities under the policies. Details are also covered within the employee handbook which is provided at induction for new starters. It is understood that existing staff also have access to the employee handbook/ staff booklet as this is available on the Authority's intranet within the Organization Development section.
- 

All staff, including Line Managers, have access to the E-learning portal which allows them to complete mandatory e-learning modules. This includes bulling, harassment, and discrimination, which is to be completed every three years and monitored by Service Partners/ OD Team for compliance. A review of the training data for all staff in the Service confirmed, 991 staff out of 1040 staff have completed their training on bullying and harassment. Compliance rate is therefore 95.3%. Discussions with the Head of Organisational Development confirmed 100% compliance rate may not be achievable due to reasons such as absences, sickness, maternity leave, however the Service expects a 100% compliance rate. It was further confirmed that when members of staff return to work, as part of their return to work, they are signposted to complete any outstanding training that is due.
- 

Discussions with the Head of HR confirmed that where a complaint or allegation relating to bullying, harassment and discrimination is received, this is discussed with the relevant Line Manager in the first instance. The recently appointed Freedom Speak up Guardian is a designated contact that employees can also speak to and share concerns with. A dedicated page on Freedom to speak up is on the Authority's Sharepoint page detailing all options available, with a form available for members of staff to report concerns. When complaints or allegations of bullying and harassment are raised and, depending on the type, it is noted that this could be resolved informally through timely dialogue with a Line Manager, a representative from HR or a member of a trade union or formally where the matter is considered too serious. In these cases, a formal written complaint is to be made by the member of staff to their Line Manager who will then contact HR/ Director of People and Development in order that an investigation is launched. Where a formal stage is triggered, an Investigating Officer/ Investigating Manager is appointed. The Authority encourages the investigation and resolving of cases of bullying and harassment in a timely manner to minimise potential stress to all those involved, and timescales have been set. It was however confirmed the timescales are only a guide and may need extension for appropriate reasons such as gathering and reviewing evidence and arranging meeting dates. The Professional Standards Dignity at Work Policy provides several options for resolving issues and complaints of bullying and harassment and the appeals process should a member of staff be dissatisfied with the outcome from the investigation. This process is known as stage 3.

Other Findings



HFRS have nine internal mediators that are used to resolve issues relating to bullying, harassment and discrimination at any stage. This process is designed to help the staff members involved to discuss their experiences, identify the impact, consider change and discuss ways in resolving the situation. The Head of HR confirmed external mediators are sometimes used to obtain more successful outcomes in sensitive/ complex cases. Testing identified all nine mediators have been fully trained and have been issued with a certificate of attendance, however not all have been accredited at the time of the audit. In relation to accreditation, this is provided externally where participants/ the Service's internal mediators would need to provide a written case study of a live mediation that they have undertaken with a witness statement from either the mediation sponsor or disputants involved within 12 months of completing the training programme. It was noted three of the mediators are within their 12 months period for them to undertake a live mediation session and gain ILM certification. Whilst it was noted that some of the mediators completed their training programme in 2011, the Head of Organisational Development confirmed that mediators meet regularly through the regional mediator forums as part of continuous professional development.



Delivery Risk:

Failure to deliver the service in an effective manner which meets the requirements of the organisation.

Ref	Expected Key Risk Mitigation		Effectiveness of arrangements	Cross Reference to MAP	Cross Reference to OEM
PM	Performance Monitoring	There are agreed KPIs for the process which align with the business plan requirements and are independently monitored, with corrective action taken in a timely manner.	Partially In place	3, & 4	-
S	Sustainability	The impact on the organisation's sustainability agenda has been considered.	In place	-	-
R	Resilience	Good practice to respond to business interruption events and to enhance the economic, effective and efficient delivery is adopted.	In place	-	-

Other Findings



The Governance, Audit and Scrutiny (GAS) Committee on the 3rd of July 2023 received a report written by the Head of Human Resources, that detailed grievances that were raised by members of staff during the period 1st April 2022 to 31st March 2023. The report provided an overview of how the Grievance Policy and Procedure was followed, identifying trends, learnings, or recommendations. It also detailed the training and resources available for key staff involved in the process. During the reporting period, it was noted there were 15 grievances raised. Three of these related to bullying and discrimination. For all 15 grievance cases, five were resolved at informal stage 1, three resolved at formal stage 2 with six proceeding to stage 3 which is the appeals stage. One further grievance is still to be heard at stage 2 and may proceed to stage 3 should the individual be unsatisfied with the outcome. The report also provided details of the outcome of the grievances with the majority being not upheld. In relation to training, it was confirmed in the report that 736 employees have completed their grievance training/module as at the time of the report.



In 2019 Humberside Fire Authority launched the Zero Tolerance for Bullying Campaign - Support, Challenge and Report. This campaign initiated and launched by the previous Chief Fire Officer was to encourage bullying to be reported with the emphasis that this would be dealt with seriously. Details of the campaign were included in the staff magazine SIREN in the August 2019 edition. This also provided a link for all staff to complete training relating to bullying and harassment. This was further reiterated in 2023 by the current Chief affirming the commitment to zero tolerance. This campaign is promoted to all members of staff through awareness posters in every service building. These posters detail confidential contact numbers and this is also on HFA's dedicated HR page on Sharepoint. It was confirmed that in March 2023, a team meeting/ training session was held, chaired by the Assistant Chief Fire Officer and the Executive Director for People and Development and Senior Corporate Assurance Officer, with all members of staff being asked to dial in. This was to further reaffirm and reinforce the Service's position on Zero Tolerance to Bullying and to discuss the Service's stand on having a positive workplace culture.



It was identified, actions / recommendations were raised by the GAS Committee during the review of the Grievance scrutiny report, some of which included the review of the Equality Impact Assessment. Testing identified that actions from the meeting have not been logged on a separate spreadsheet, however the Head of HR confirmed that these actions are due to be logged with an update provided to GAS in September or November 2023.

Other Findings



As part of the options available to manage bullying, harassment and discrimination, members of staff have access to Occupational Health and Wellbeing who can refer them to partner organisations who offer counselling service 24 hours a day, every week.



An external provider has been commissioned to undertake an employee survey to help the Authority understand the attitude, behaviours, and beliefs of the workforce with the aim to continually drive the positive workplace culture. This is understood to launch in September 2023.



A Freedom to Speak Up Policy is being drafted by the Freedom to Speak Up Guardian with consultations and input from relevant teams including the HR Team. This policy is to promote the role of the Guardian in dealing with cases of bullying, harassment, and victimisation, ensuring that staff are able to report these issues / concerns without fear of reprisal and highlighting the support and options available.



Regular communications on the Zero Tolerance campaign are reinforced through the staff magazine/ bulletin which is published every fortnight. In the most recent editions, the different support routes available to staff members who may be facing bullying, harassment and victimisation are listed. They include through access to the dedicated SharePoint portal page that has all internal and external support routes available for staff to speak up, raise concerns and get support in confidence.



Ten members of staff, from different teams, were interviewed in order to establish their knowledge of the various bullying, harassment, and discrimination policies and other documentation and how HFRS manages cases. Questions asked included: had they experienced bullying, harassment, and discrimination since they joined the service; are they confident that they could speak up if they were to experience bullying, harassment, or discrimination; are they confident that the Service would treat the matter seriously; and do they know who the designated contact for reporting cases/ Freedom to Speak Up Guardian is?

Comments obtained confirmed that all employees knew the designated contact for reporting cases/ Freedom to Speak up Guardian and knew where to find the policies that relate to this subject area. All had completed relevant training and have knowledge on how to report cases that fall under this subject area.

Some comments, however, suggested that the process may not have been fully embedded as hoped and should be considered as part of the external reviews to be undertaken to seek to build on some concerns highlighted during the audit. These concerns and comments were communicated to the Head of Corporate Assurance during the audit.

EXPLANATORY INFORMATION

Appendix A

Scope and Limitations of the Review

1. The definition of the type of review, the limitations and the responsibilities of management in regard to this review are set out in the Annual Plan. As set out in the Audit Charter, substantive testing is only carried out where this has been agreed with management and unless explicitly shown in the scope no such work has been performed.

Disclaimer

2. The matters raised in this report are only those that came to the attention of the auditor during the course of the review, and are not necessarily a comprehensive statement of all the weaknesses that exist or all the improvements that might be made. This report has been prepared solely for management's use and must not be recited or referred to in whole or in part to third parties without our prior written consent. No responsibility to any third party is accepted as the report has not been prepared, and is not intended, for any other purpose. TIAA neither owes nor accepts any duty of care to any other party who may receive this report and specifically disclaims any liability for loss, damage or expense of whatsoever nature, which is caused by their reliance on our report.

Effectiveness of arrangements

3. The definitions of the effectiveness of arrangements are set out below. These are based solely upon the audit work performed, assume business as usual, and do not necessarily cover management override or exceptional circumstances.

In place	The control arrangements in place mitigate the risk from arising.
Partially in place	The control arrangements in place only partially mitigate the risk from arising.
Not in place	The control arrangements in place do not effectively mitigate the risk from arising.

Assurance Assessment

4. The definitions of the assurance assessments are:

Substantial Assurance	There is a robust system of internal controls operating effectively to ensure that risks are managed and process objectives achieved.
Reasonable Assurance	The system of internal controls is generally adequate and operating effectively but some improvements are required to ensure that risks are managed and process objectives achieved.
Limited Assurance	The system of internal controls is generally inadequate or not operating effectively and significant improvements are required to ensure that risks are managed and process objectives achieved.
No Assurance	There is a fundamental breakdown or absence of core internal controls requiring immediate action.

Acknowledgement

5. We would like to thank staff for their co-operation and assistance during the course of our work.

Release of Report

6. The table below sets out the history of this report.

Stage	Issued	Response Received
Audit Planning Memorandum:	12 th July 2023	19 th July 2023
Draft Report:	25 th August 2023	
Final Report:		

AUDIT PLANNING MEMORANDUM

Appendix B

Client:	Humberside Fire & Rescue				
Review:	Bullying, Harassment and Discrimination				
Type of Review:	Assurance	Audit Lead:	Ade Kosoko		
Outline scope (per Annual Plan):	The review will consider the action taken to minimise instances of bullying, harassment and discrimination, the reporting and investigation processes. The review will also consider promotion of the No Tolerance campaign.				
Detailed scope will consider:	<div>The review will set out to provide assurance to the Governance, Audit and Scrutiny Committee that the organisation has robust controls in relation to the preventing and managing cases of bullying and harassment and discrimination.</div> <div><ul style="list-style-type: none">• The policy and procedures are up-to-date, clearly define responsibilities and are available to staff.• Practices are in place to prevent Bullying, Harassment and Discrimination.• Staff inductions and ongoing briefing cover these areas.• A designated trained contact is in place to receive and manage cases.• Reported complaints are dealt with in a timely manner.• Complaints are recorded centrally for monitoring purposes.• Exit meetings and staff surveys are utilised to gauge workplace culture and to track trends.• The No Tolerance campaign has been promoted to staff.</div>				
Planned Start Date:	21/07/2023	Exit Meeting Date:	28/07/2023	Exit Meeting to be held with:	Anne Stott (Head of Human Resources); Kevil Hill (Freedom Speak Up Guardian); Simon Rhodes, Jamie Morris (Designate Head of Corporate Assurance); Simon Rhodes (Head of Corporate Assurance) and Sam O’Connor (Head of Organisational Development)

SELF ASSESSMENT RESPONSE

Matters over the previous 12 months relating to activity to be reviewed	Y/N (if Y then please provide brief details separately)
Has there been any reduction in the effectiveness of the internal controls due to staff absences through sickness and/or vacancies etc?	N
Have there been any breakdowns in the internal controls resulting in disciplinary action or similar?	N
Have there been any significant changes to the process?	N

Are there any particular matters/periods of time you would like the review to consider?

N

**RESPONSE TO HMICFRS ANNUAL ASSESSMENT OF FIRE AND RESCUE
AUTHORITIES IN ENGLAND**

1. SUMMARY

- 1.1 Every year His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) publishes a state of fire report which is an annual assessment of all Fire and Rescue Services (FRS) in England. The report is based upon the inspections carried out since the previous State of Fire reporting timeframe.
- 1.2 In compiling the report, His Majesty's Chief Inspector of FRS, Andy Cooke QPM DL writes to authorities across England, to contribute to the report, which he did so to the Chair of the Fire Authority 15 November 2023.
- 1.3 With a response date required of 1 December, a draft response to the 10 questions asked by HMICFRS is set out at Appendix 2 for Members consideration and approval.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 It is recommended that the Fire Authority approves the response to HMICFRS as set out at Appendix 2, ahead of the submission deadline of 1 December 2023.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 Every year the HMICFRS publishes a state of fire report which is an annual assessment of all Fire and Rescue Services (FRS) in England. The report is submitted to the Secretary of State under the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004 containing a holistic assessment of the effectiveness and efficiency of all FRS.
- 3.2 The report is based upon the inspections carried out since the previous state of fire reporting timeframe. In compiling the report, His Majesty's Chief Inspector of FRS, Andy Cooke QPM DL writes to authorities across England, to contribute to the report, which he did so to the Chair of the Fire Authority 15 November 2023.

4. REPORT DETAIL

- 4.1 The annual report by HMICFRS is intended to be published in Spring of 2024.
- 4.2 The letter as set out at Appendix 1 from Andy Cooke QPM DL to the Fire Authority asks for a response to 10 specific areas, with a response deadline of 1 December 2023.
- 4.3 The Authority's draft response to this letter is set out at Appendix 2 for Members' consideration.
- 4.4 HFRS intends to include several images in the return and as requested in the letter, for use within the final report (see Appendix 3).

5. EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 There is no requirement to carry out an equality impact analysis as this report does not relate to a policy or service delivery change.

6. CONCLUSION

- 6.1 Members are requested to consider the draft response to the HMICFRS questions as set out at Appendix 1 for approval and onward submission.

Phil Shillito
Chief Fire Officer & Chief Executive

Officer Contact

Steve Duffield – Area Manager of Service Improvement

☎ 07896 804933

✉ sduffield@humbersidefire.gov.uk

Background Papers

None

Glossary/Abbreviations

FRS	Fire and Rescue Services
HMICFRS	His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services



23 Stephenson Street
Birmingham B2 4BH

Email: Andrew.Cooke@hmicfrs.gov.uk

Andy Cooke QPM DL

His Majesty's Chief Inspector of
Constabulary His Majesty's Chief
Inspector of Fire & Rescue Services

Sent by email:

Chairs

Fire and Rescue Authorities

15 November 2023

Dear Chairs,

Annual assessment of fire and rescue authorities in England

This letter asks for your advice and assistance in connection with my preparation of the annual assessment of the efficiency and effectiveness of fire and rescue authorities in England. This is the report which I am required by section 28 of the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004 to submit to the Home Secretary and lay before Parliament. I greatly value your views.

The 2023 annual report will provide my second annual assessment as His Majesty's Chief Inspector of Fire and Rescue Services. I intend to take this opportunity to reflect on the overall progress made since July 2017, when HMICFRS had its remit extended to include inspections of England's fire and rescue services. In particular, I will reflect on progress that we have seen since the start of our second full round of inspections commenced in February 2021.

My annual report will provide my assessment of the state of fire and rescue authorities in England. I appreciate your input, to ensure the report concentrates on the things which matter most.

To this end, I should be grateful for your views on the following questions in particular:

1. Do you consider that the delay in publishing the Government's White Paper on reforming the fire and rescue sector (published in May 2022) had a negative effect on the sector? And do you consider that the subsequent delays to bring about reform have also affected the sector? If so, what consequences have there been?

2. How would a College of Fire and Rescue be beneficial to the sector?
3. What has your organisation done to implement the recommendations made in the Grenfell Tower Inquiry's Phase 1 report (published on 30 October 2019)?
4. What challenges are you facing when it comes to making your service more efficient and effective and providing public value?
5. To what extent has our spotlight report on values and culture in fire and rescue services and our misconduct thematic inspection changed your prioritisation of work in these areas?
6. For those organisations that have been subject to our values and culture spotlight report recommendations, what problems, if any, have you experienced when implementing the recommendations?
7. What challenges do you think the current on-call model presents and do you think it is sustainable?
8. What do you see as your biggest challenges in making progress against your organisation's future plans?
9. What do you think your fire and rescue service is doing well?
10. What changes have occurred or are planned – both locally and nationally – in response to the second round of our inspections; what effect have they had, or do you expect them to have?

The plan is to publish the annual assessment in spring 2024. It would be greatly appreciated if I could have your views no later than 1 December 2023.

If you have any queries about this request, and indeed wider views on what I should include in my assessment, please let me know.

I would also be grateful if services could please submit images that we can use as a cover image for my report.

Finally, we are considering our post-2024 approach to fire and rescue inspections, we will ensure you will have an opportunity to provide feedback and inform our plans.

Yours sincerely,



Andy Cooke QPM DL

His Majesty's Chief Inspector of Constabulary

His Majesty's Chief Inspector of Fire & Rescue Services



HUMBERSIDE
Fire & Rescue Service

Service Headquarters
Summergroves Way
Kingston Upon Hull
HU4 7BB
01482 565333
www.humbersidefire.gov.uk

Dear Andy

Annual assessment of fire and rescue authorities in England

This is a collective response representing the views of Humberside Fire Authority (HFA) and Humberside Fire and Rescue Service (HFRS).

1. Do you consider that the delay in publishing the Government's White Paper on reforming the fire and rescue sector (published in May 2022) had a negative effect on the sector? And do you consider that the subsequent delays to bring about reform have also affected the sector? If so, what consequences have there been?

Yes, continuing to wait for a response to inform the future strategic direction becomes challenging for services. The response to the White paper will have a bearing on a whole host of issues affecting the sector and therefore the service, including CRMPs. The subsequent delay on responding to reform also affects any refresh of an updated national framework document, consequentially the importance of this document in the drive to reform may be undermined and lead to uncertainty on the future and the implementation of change. Dependant on the direction set out in the Governments response to the White paper it is also likely to impact on the strategic and long-term planning of the Service, eg recruitment and training activity.

Furthermore, the ongoing challenges of designing and implementing change against a rigid National Joint Council (NJC), having to take matters through a slow process, brings about further delays and challenges impacting on delivering sector wide changes and improvement in efficiency and productivity.

2. How would a College of Fire and Rescue be beneficial to the sector?

A College of Fire and Rescue may deliver benefits around greater consistency in the core functions of all FRS. However, governance arrangements, implementation and establishment should be complimentary to, and not detract from some of the national established programmes that are in place. Examples include work delivered by the Fire Standards Board (FSB) and that of the National Fire Chiefs Council to achieve consistency in areas across operational response and leadership development. A central body for the production and update of Fire Service guidance, doctrine and, where appropriate accreditation would be beneficial and assist with standardisation.

National challenges that exist across the FRS currently in accessing training and qualification delivered by private sector bodies, such as Building Safety and Protection



HUMBERSIDE
Fire & Rescue Service

and regulation, may benefit from sector ownership within a College of Fire and Rescue to improve access, consistency, and quality.

3. What has your organisation done to implement the recommendations made in the Grenfell Tower Inquiry's Phase 1 report (published on 30 October 2019)?

The service was proactive in supporting owners of high-rise premises in the immediate aftermath of the Grenfell Tower incident, providing assurance and advice to a range of stakeholders including responsible persons, occupiers, and central government departments.

The service also recognised the impact this incident would have locally, regionally and nationally and as such implemented a team with a single focus on tall buildings and the implementation of ensuing recommendations from the inquiry.

We continue to work with building owners and partners to address the remaining two recommendations of the 46 within the Grenfell Tower Inquiry's Phase 1 report, as well as contributing to national workstreams on issues such as evacuation guidance. All recommendations will be completed by 31 March 2024.

Training packages have been created for our full-time and on-call operational staff and control room, covering Cladding and External Fire Spread, Effective risk information gathering and 72d visits in tall buildings.

Fire Survival Guidance for our control room, including high volume calls and the use of electronic evacuation boards, the sharing of information between control and the incident ground and effective communications with the incident commander.

We have developed new operational pre-plans for high rise residential buildings.

We have procured additional specialist equipment to assist in tackling fires in tall buildings including Smoke Hoods, Smoke Curtains, High Rise branches, 51mm hose, NPAS uplink equipment and Gas Detection equipment.

New operational guidance has been developed to better assist crews to deal effectively with fires in tall buildings, including the transition from stay put to full evacuation. Testing and evaluation will be conducted through exercising and training to ensure that the arrangements are suitable and practical for the High-Rise risks within our area.

We have worked with building owners to ensure commonality in terms of issues such as the provision of Premise Information Boxes and Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans.

We facilitated a successful HMICFRS Control Room exercise pilot to test the Control Room specific learning from the Grenfell Tower Inquiry.

4. What challenges are you facing when it comes to making your service more efficient and effective and providing public value?

Long-term funding settlements for FRSs will logically help support financial planning and the delivery of an effective and efficient service to our community. Any review, of the funding formula itself, should be based upon empirical evidence supported by the sector



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and has to be flexible enough to take into account both locality risk and local geographical diversity having a significant impact upon fire station profiles and fire engine travel times, such as coastline, industry and conurbations and major river/estuaries such as the Humber with limited crossing points.

Development and clarity on the role of the FRS and of a Firefighter, rather than the current restrictive arrangements within the Grey Book and role maps, would be a positive area of reform that would add public value. We have already demonstrated our ability to make a valuable contribution in other areas such as medical response and a vulnerable person falls service, as well as COVID19 pandemic activities in support of health partners. Greater emphasis from a National Framework on this role would help drive further effectiveness in delivering public value and outcomes.

There is an increased burden on the Survey to furnish information to a number of agencies including NFCC, HMICFRS and Home Office. If there were to be an improved central approach to data collection, as noted in the National Frameworks; Single Data List (National Framework 7.16) it would naturally reduce the burden on the Service and improve wider sectoral efficiencies.

The mechanics of the NJC and the Grey book are not conducive to moving forward in an agile way that allows services to meet the needs of their communities or enhance their efficiency and productivity.

An example of this would be Service A takes a business case to the Joint Secretaries for changing the start/finish time and duration of shifts. The Joint Secretaries uphold the business case and Service A implements the changes. It seems inefficient and unnecessary for further services to take the same issue through the same process and on occasions get a different outcome.

5. To what extent has our spotlight report on values and culture in fire and rescue services and our misconduct thematic inspection changed your prioritisation of work in these areas?

The focus on people has always been a component of our Strategic Plan, this was recognised with a rating of good in this area from our round two inspection, the service continues to recognise the need to prioritise issues that impact on our staff and the community we aspire to protect. The spotlight report and misconduct thematic inspection have been a useful addition to the inspection framework to provide the opportunity to both reflect and undertake a gap analysis on issues identified across the sector.

Whilst the spotlight report drew together a number of cases and issues across the sector and provided recommendations to improve, we had, following the publication of the Independent Culture Review of London Fire Brigade already commissioned our own Independent review to provide an insight into our own organisation prior to the work of HMICFRS. This commission looked to reflect the points covered by reports in the sector, and from other sectors, to assure ourselves that the previous embedding of the NFCC Core Code of Ethics, recognition by HMICFRS in our round two inspection, remained and to provide a baseline for continued improvement.



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Since publication of the work by Nazir Afzal OBE the service has produced a number of communications reinforcing our position, and the service has introduced additional independent reporting lines to complement those already in existence.

I remain confident that our service will always prioritise work which is related to our people and the communities of the Humber area, through our strategic plan.

6. For those organisations that have been subject to our values and culture spotlight report recommendations, what problems, if any, have you experienced when implementing the recommendations?

Due to the aforementioned focus on people throughout our strategic plan, a number of the recommendations were able to be quickly assessed and considered as adopted and in place. Our transition from our previous internally developed cultural values into early adoption of the Core Code of Ethics which in turn influenced Professional Standards policies and content, has allowed us to progress quickly with most recommendations.

However, a number of the recommendations that are reliant upon factors outside of the control of a single FRS, were ambitious in the timescales set. Changes to legislation and national implications have led to some delays with the implementation of some recommendations.

7. What challenges do you think the current on-call model presents and do you think it is sustainable?

The current on call model is sustained in HFRS by supporting full time firefighters to carry out on call duties when off from their primary employment (dual contract). This creates challenges for protracted incidents, industrial action and long-term resilience. The on-call model is not sustainable without the support of our firefighters that offer this flexibility and commitment.

Away from this support, recruitment and retention is a challenge within the on-call model and whilst the aforementioned support provides Humberside FRS with a longer retention time, the national average of 7 years is a challenging position to ascertain the longer-term sustainability and viability of the current on-call model. Coupled with this, the recruitment from rural communities with changing societal profiles (that may not be commensurate with staffing of an on-call model), also poses challenge into the future of the model.

Technology changes can play a part in sustaining a model to meet the risk in the more rural areas, however, this pace of change is within the limitations of current funding arrangements to fully explore.

Humberside FRS benefit from some collaboration with major employers that are located in areas where our CRMP requires a resource however such collaborations are limited. Further incentivising major employers and industry nationally may open discussion for sustainability of differing fire cover models into the future.



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There appears to be a limited understanding of the On-call system away from those services that operate an on-call model. This limited awareness of the On call model makes central decisions somewhat challenging to implement.

HFRS continues to be involved in the National Fire Chief Councils group focusing on the On-Call workforce challenges additional support from a national college of fire would be welcome.

8. What do you see as your biggest challenges in making progress against your organisation's future plans?

Long-term funding settlements for FRSs will help support financial planning and the delivery of an effective and efficient service to our community. This also noted in question 4, as the existing short term funding arrangements do not contribute to the FRS ability to carry out ambitious and longer-term planning for a FRS that can meet the resourcing challenges to manage and mitigate the changing risks and needs for communities in the Humber area, including the recent risks posed by environmental impacts, pandemics and other major incidents.

The current restrictive arrangements within the Grey Book, would be a positive area of reform that would add public value. Whilst locally we have managed to demonstrate making contributions beyond the statute and core functions of the FRS, nationally, the cumbersome and outdated means of negotiating pay and changes to the role of a Fire Service and to the Firefighter role remains a big challenge in progressing toward our ambitious plans.

Whilst some progress has been seen locally and nationally, diversity in recruitment to operational roles remains a challenge now and into the future. Further clarity in role and role maps will aid in local efforts for diversity in recruitment, selection and retention of staff. Our people remain our key focus in delivering an excellent service to the Humber area, recent research into contaminant exposure risk for firefighters, as well as mental health prevalence in the sector, remains a challenge for us to mitigate risk and provide a safe career choice now and into the future, from employers that have the capacity and resource to prioritise the wellness of staff and colleagues.

The previously mentioned increased burden on FRS to furnish data returns, inspection regimes and other areas of Governance need, are having an impact on resourcing requirements and priorities. Focus on efficient process nationally must be considered, to reduce the burden on local FRS.

The role technology plays in fire service reform can be big, but only by funding and resourcing this correctly and nationally, can the progress be realised across the sector. HFRS continues to collaborate locally with partners, from data sharing to delivery however, this can be much improved and could be directed and influenced nationally, to draw together better collaboration between public services to maximise outcomes. We have made good progress in our duty to collaborate but don't necessarily see the reciprocal desire to do so from other agencies. We will continue to explore and develop these opportunities whether they exist.



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9. What do you think your fire and rescue service is doing well?

Wellbeing arrangements for all staff groups are effective and innovative and continue to improve. An independent Employee Assistance Programme is available for all staff, family members and employees that retire are provided with 12 months support to freely access. This provides a broad offering of mental and physical wellbeing support and advice, financial guidance and holistic welfare support through a professional, confidential and independent service.

We continue to build on our innovative use of analytics, data and intelligence to inform prevention, protection and response activities and increase productivity. Our activities are led by a professional Data and Intelligence Team that utilises sector leading skills and professional qualifications in data science, forensic intelligence, statistical and data analysis and evaluation.

We have developed an effective performance and improvement framework that will drive continuous improvement recognising that investment in this area of corporate governance provides a measurable and lasting return on investment.

Our fulltime firefighters are effectively and efficiently engaged in a broad range of risk and intelligence led activities to support prevention and protection engagement, activity is centrally planned, allocated and community focused to improve community outcomes.

We have continued to build on effective and evaluated engagement and consultation with our communities using on-line and social media applications. We continue to manage in-year budgets and are good at planning for the future taking account of financial and other risks effectively and efficiently.

Our governance arrangements through Humberside Fire Authority are robust and set out in a formal Constitution. The Constitution clearly describes how decisions are taken by Members and Officers including the delegated authority of the Chief Fire Officer. A bespoke committee structure has also been adopted including an independent scrutiny committee. We encourage the Inspectorate to consider the value of a Governance element within future inspections.

We have a good mix of full-time and on-call stations which are proportionate to our risk, crews are well trained and well equipped and as such we have excellent Service wide availability and response times to life threatening emergencies in line with our published Community Risk Management Plan intervention standards.



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	Performance Targets 2023/24	What was achieved Apr. 2023 – Sep. 2023
<p>The first fire engine mobilised to Dwelling Fires or Road Traffic Collisions is in attendance within the specified times:</p> <p>Dwelling Fires High Risk Areas 8 minutes Medium Risk Areas 12 minutes Low Risk Area 20 minutes Road Traffic Collisions in any area 15 minutes</p>	90%	97.84%
<p>Second fire engine mobilised to a Dwelling Fire or a Road Traffic Collision is in attendance within 5 minutes of the first fire engine arriving at the incident.</p>	80%	92.17%

FIG1: Attendance Times (*Bi-Annual Performance Report (HFRS; p10:2023)*)

10. What changes have occurred or are planned – both locally and nationally – in response to the second round of our inspections; what effect have they had, or do you expect them to have?

The second round of inspections has acted as a catalyst for our Service to embrace and resource continuous improvement. Locally we implemented this approach following the first round of inspections and this has helped change culture towards honest self-assessment and addressing issues proactively. This approach was the driver for our improved grading by the Inspectorate from round two.

Nationally, the publication of fire standards has been a key development during and since round two of inspections. Locally, these standards have been adopted and used to continuously improve the areas which they cover. Our Service have found this useful to further demonstrate the excellent service delivered to the communities of the Humber area.

HFRS images to be sent with response





