



Promoting improvements
in policing and fire & rescue
services to make everyone safer

23 Stephenson Street
Birmingham B2 4BH
Direct line: 020 3513 0523
Email: roy.wilsher@hmicfrs.gov.uk

HMI Roy Wilsher
His Majesty's Inspector of Fire and
Rescue Services

Chief Fire Officers
Service Liaison Officers

26 June 2023

Dear colleague,

Reminder: Values and Culture Spotlight Report Recommendations

HMCI Andy Cooke wrote to you on 31 May, regarding the recommendations in the [spotlight report on values and culture in the fire and rescue service](#) that HMICFRS published on 31 March 2023. I reiterated HMCI Cooke's messages within my sector update letter of 12 June.

Thank you to those services who have provided updates. However, it is disappointing that too many services have not yet submitted an update. As the first official deadline, of 1 June 2023, has now passed, I feel the need to reiterate our messages. I am therefore writing to remind you to please:

- implement the recommendations that are aimed at chief fire officers, by the stated deadlines; and
- provide us with updates via the process set out below.

The recommendations with deadlines that have already passed, or are due within the next six weeks are listed at Annex A. If you have any concerns about meeting a specific recommendation, please get in touch with your HMI directly.

I am also writing to remind you of how you can provide these updates. As HMCI Cooke and I explained in our letters, to monitor these recommendations, we will use the existing Huddle spaces that services use for their document returns. These should be familiar to service liaison officers, who have access. A specific folder is available for each service within their Huddle workspace, containing a spreadsheet for the specific monitoring of the recommendations, in lieu of the portal. We ask services to provide updates within these

spreadsheets, by the relevant deadlines, to include a self-assessment of whether or not they have met each recommendation, and a short narrative of no more than 300 words per recommendation, if necessary. If you have any queries about this process, please get in touch with us via hmicfrsfireteam@hmicfrs.gov.uk.

Please note that it is inappropriate to provide details of specific misconduct allegations, or any personal or sensitive information within these updates. Please notify your HMI directly of information of this nature.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'RW', is positioned above the typed name of the signatory.

HMI Roy Wilsher OBE QFSM

His Majesty's Inspector of Fire and Rescue Services

Annex A

The following recommendation deadlines have now passed:

Recommendation 3

By 1 June 2023, chief fire officers should review the support available for those who have raised concerns and take any action needed to make sure these provisions are suitable.

Recommendation 4

By 1 June 2023, chief fire officers should assure themselves that updates on how concerns are being handled are shared with those who have raised them. The updates should be given in an accessible way that encourages trust and confidence in the service response. Consideration should be given to creating a professional standards function to handle conduct concerns in service (or from an external service) to have oversight of cases, to make sure they are conducted in a fair and transparent way and to act as a point of contact for all staff involved.

Recommendation 5

By 1 June 2023, chief fire officers should make sure they provide accessible information for all staff and members of the public on how they can raise concerns and access confidential support (including through external agencies). Chief fire officers should also make sure accessible information is provided on how concerns and allegations will be investigated in a way that ensures confidentiality and is independent of the alleged perpetrator.

Recommendation 17

With immediate effect, chief fire officers should notify HMICFRS of any allegations that have the potential to constitute staff gross misconduct that:

- involve allegations of a criminal nature that have the potential to affect public confidence in FRSS;
- are of a serious nature; or
- relate to assistant chief fire officers or those at equivalent or higher grades.

Recommendation 20

By 1 June 2023, chief fire officers should have plans in place to ensure they meet the Fire Standards Board's leading the service standard and its leading and developing people standard.

Recommendation 21

By 1 June 2023, chief fire officers should make sure there is a full, 360-degree feedback process in place for all senior leaders and managers (assistant chief fire officer equivalent and above) in service.

Recommendation 23

By 1 June 2023, chief fire officers should seek regular feedback from staff about values, culture, fairness and diversity, with due regard to the leading and developing people standard. They should show how they act on this feedback.

Recommendation 27

By 1 June 2023, chief fire officers should make sure their equality impact assessments are fit for purpose and, as a minimum, meet the requirements of the National Fire Chiefs Council equality impact assessment toolkit.

Recommendation 28

By 1 June 2023, chief fire officers should review how they gather and use equality and diversity data to improve their understanding of their staff demographics, including applying and meeting the requirements of the National Fire Chiefs Council equality, diversity and inclusion data toolkit.

Recommendation 32

By 1 June 2023, chief fire officers should, as a priority, specify in succession plans how they intend to improve diversity across all levels of the service. This should include offering increased direct-entry opportunities.

Recommendation 34

With immediate effect, chief fire officers should review their implementation of the Core Code of Ethics and make sure it is being applied across their services.

The following recommendations are due within the next six weeks:

Recommendation 18

By 1 August 2023, chief fire officers should provide assurances to HMICFRS that all parties are supported in relation to ongoing investigations.

Recommendation 33

By 1 August 2023, chief fire officers should develop plans to promote progression paths for existing staff in non-operational roles and put plans in place to reduce any inequalities of opportunity.