

SOUTH YORKSHIRE FIRE & RESCUE AUTHORITY

Meeting	FIRE & RESCUE AUTHORITY
Meeting Date	19 FEBRUARY 2024
Report of	CHIEF FIRE OFFICER AND CHIEF EXECUTIVE
Report Sponsor(s)	ASSISTANT CHIEF FIRE OFFICER/ DIRECTOR OF SERVICE IMPROVEMENT
Subject	SERVICE IMPROVEMENT BOARD UPDATE

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report provides a summary of the items raised and discussed at the Service Improvement Board in Quarter 3 2023/24.

One meeting was held during this period on 19 December 2023. The Service Improvement Board provides a strategic and critical role as a guardian of the South Yorkshire Fire and Rescue (SYFR) Service Improvement Plan.

RECOMMENDATION(S)

Members are recommended to:

- a) To note the contents of the report and provide further scrutiny and support to enable continuous service improvement.

CONTENTS

Main Report

Appendix A – His Majesty’s Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) Areas for Improvement progress report

BACKGROUND

1. The Service Improvement Board is an internal meeting that monitors progress of objectives that sit on the SYFR Service Improvement Plan. These objectives are generated from various local, regional and national reports, frameworks and events that have influence in the activities at SYFR. The Service Improvement Board has committed to provide quarterly updates to the South Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Authority (SYFRA).
2. The Board also have a delegated budget, the Service Improvement Fund, to support the delivery of the Service Improvement Plan objectives.
3. The work of the Service Improvement Board has significantly increased since it was established. An evaluation of the Service Improvement Board has been conducted, and it has been agreed that the HMICFRS Areas for Improvement will be reported to every board meeting. However, other service improvement work streams will take a themed and/ or risk based approach, and therefore, will not be reported at every meeting.

MAIN REPORT

4. HMICFRS inspection report for SYFR (published January 2023) identified 20 Areas for Improvement (AFIs). All of these AFIs were determined to be high priority. The Board received and scrutinised reports for all the AFIs identified in the SYFR inspection report. We are aware that HMICFRS will expect to see progress against these AFIs. Further information for the AFIs can be found in Appendix A.
5. Members may recall that some of the deadlines for the completion of AFIs were imminent but that the 'progress complete' measure was showing a low percentage. The deadlines and percentage completions, for the majority of the AFIs, have been reviewed and amended. Many of the AFIs are on track for completion prior to the SYFR HMICFRS inspection commencing in February 2025.
6. The Board reviewed the 'closed' service improvement actions report.
7. The Board heard that the Professional Fire Standards (PFS) assurance group had held their first meeting and provided assurances around the Emergency Preparedness PFS. The next meeting is in January 2024 and will look at the Safeguarding PFS.
8. The Board reviewed a report into all the funding bids that have been approved from the Service Improvement Fund.
9. The Board also received five new funding bids:
 - i. Payroll and Pensions role - To ensure that both business as usual and the legal remedy of the pension cases is kept up to date and achieves all deadlines, the proposal was to recruit a Payroll and Pensions Officer (Grade 6) for 12 months. The bid was approved by the Board, who acknowledged there is a legal deadline in place to get this work done.
 - ii. Positive Action resource packs – To increase the number of resources packs to support the delivery of positive action work in the communities. Instead of having one resource (currently stored at Parkway Station) the proposal was that we

replicate this so that the same resources are available in each of the four districts, with an additional resource available at Lifewise Centre and for the On-Call Support Team. The Board approved the bid in principle but asked if the money could be funded within current budget.

- iii. Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) changes for enhanced checks - As of July 2023, Fire and Rescue Authorities are now listed in the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 following a case made by the National Fire Chiefs' Council (NFCC). The amendment to the Act means that fire and rescue services will now be required to perform a minimum of standard disclosure and barring checks for all representatives of their Service, including new and current staff. As a result, this will mean all current operational staff will be required to have an enhanced DBS check, as will any other staff that are in roles that are deemed to undertake regulated activity. All other staff will be required to have a standard DBS check. The Board approved this bid.
 - iv. Community Risk Management Planning (CRMP) - SYFR has asked Operational Research in Health Ltd (ORH) to undertake a Fire Cover Review to support the planning of resourcing across South Yorkshire. The Board approved this bid.
 - v. 360 training - Costings for the introduction of the 360 process originally covered set up, feedback and updates to the Senior Leadership Team (SLT). This request was for additional funding for the remainder of the project to cover facilitator training and subscription costs. The Board approved this bid.
10. The Board received an update paper on the recommendations from the Manchester Arena Inquiry.
 11. A Specialisms Review Programme paper was received by the Board. Approval was given to start work on the two projects outlined in the paper, Marauding Terrorist Attacks and Heavy Rescue Pumps. The Board requested an update and options report at the next meeting in March 2024.
 12. The Board received a paper proposing the renaming and restructuring of the Operational Research and Development (ORD) Committee to Operational Research and Learning Evaluation Committee (ORLEC). It also included a restructure and refresh of the eight Operational Competency Steering Groups and the addition of two further Steering Groups reporting to that committee.
 13. The Service Improvement Risk Register was received by the Board. All the risks, along with the control measures/ mitigating actions have been reviewed. The register is up to date and will continue to be reviewed at future meetings. Currently there are not any high risks on the risk register. Medium risks are:
 - i. Lack of capacity to ensure that recommendations are actioned could result in the Service not continuously improving.
 - ii. Lack of available information to evidence the sub-diagnostic questions could result in SYFR not providing the necessary evidence and further scrutiny during the inspection visit.
 - iii. Lack of finance to ensure that recommendations are actioned could result in the Service not continuously improving.

- iv. SYFR have not conducted a full review against the HMICFRS inspection framework since Spring/ Summer 2021. This could result in SYFR having not improved across all diagnostic areas, as well as being unprepared for any inspection. This could result in a poor inspection outcome.
- v. Service Improvement Fund - Without additional funds, the Service Improvement Board will not be able to approve and allocate resources to service improvement activities, as per their delegated authority. This could in turn affect the rapid and sustainable improvements as set out in the Service Improvement Plan.
- vi. Lack of accurate data returns to HMICFRS could result in SYFR performance appearing to be weaker than it actually is.

Fire and Rescue Service HMICFRS Inspection Updates

HMI Thematic Review of Misconduct

- 14. The Inspectorate is due to complete the thematic review of misconduct in the ten selected services by the end of January. SYFR were not selected as one of these services.
- 15. The thematic report is planned to be released in June 2024 and will include sector wide actions and recommendations, rather than service specific actions and recommendations.
- 16. SYFR is expected to report progress against the recommendations in the HMICFRS culture and values report to HMICFRS. FRA members received regular updates on the culture recommendations.

Next HMICFRS inspection

- 17. The next HMICFRS inspection of SYFR will commence on 9 December 2024, when we will be requested to complete a document review, staff survey and self-assessment. The fieldwork will be from week commencing 10 February 2025.
- 18. The next inspection is likely to focus in particular on efficiency and productivity, looking at areas like station shift patterns and work routines. Culture is also likely to come under scrutiny.

Round three inspection reports

- 19. Twelve inspection reports from Round three of inspections have now been published. SYFR have reviewed these reports for benchmarking purposes. The reports are available on the [HMICFRS publications web page](#).
- 20. The next State of Fire and Rescue report is due to be published in Spring 2024.

CONTRIBUTION TO OUR ASPIRATIONS

- Be a great place to work**- we will create the right culture, values and behaviours to make this a brilliant place to work that is inclusive for all
- Put people first**- we will spend money carefully, use our resources wisely and collaborate with others to provide the best deal to the communities we serve

- Strive to be the best in everything we do-** we will work with others, make the most of technology and develop leaders to become the very best at what we can be

CONTRIBUTION TO SERVICE IMPROVEMENT

- [HMICFRS Inspection Framework e.g. Diagnostic area and/ or diagnostic questions](#)
- [SYFR Inspection report Areas for Improvement \(AFIs\)](#)
- [Fit for the Future Improvement Objectives](#)
- [Professional Standards for Fire & Rescue Services in England](#)
- [SYFR Service Plan 2023-24 Priorities](#)
- [SYFR Community Risk Management Plan 2021-24](#)

This report monitors progress against the areas for improvement outlined in the HMICFRS inspections reports. The service improvement plan supports delivery against the HMICFRS inspection framework.
The Service Improvement Board also monitors progress against the Fire Standards and Fit for the Future.
The improvement actions support the delivery of the SYFR Service Plan priorities and the CRMP.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR COLLABORATION

- Yes
- No

SYFR will work closely with fire and rescue services and other organisations to continuously benchmark against the recommendations and inspection criteria.

CORPORATE RISK ASSESSMENT AND BUSINESS CONTINUITY IMPLICATIONS

- 21. SYFR need to ensure they have the capacity and capability to implement any recommendations in the SYFR inspection report and continuously improve. There also needs to be the capacity to ensure all the inspection work is completed.

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT COMPLETED

- Yes

Summary of any Adverse Impacts Identified:	Key Mitigating Actions Proposed and Agreed:

- No
- N/A

If required, an equality impact assessment has will be completed for the agreed recommendations

HEALTH AND SAFETY RISK ASSESSMENT COMPLETED

- Yes
 No
 N/A

If required, a health and safety risk assessment will be completed for the agreed recommendations

SCHEME OF DELEGATION

22. Under the South Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Authority [Scheme of Delegation](#) a decision *is required / *has been approved at Service level.

Delegated Power Yes
 No

IMPLICATIONS

23. Consider whether this report has any of the following implications and if so, address them below:; Diversity, Financial, Asset Management, Environmental and Sustainability, Fleet, Communications, ICT, Health and Safety, Data Protection, Collaboration, Legal and Industrial Relations implications have been considered in compiling this report.

List of background documents		
Report Author:	Name:	Carolyn Winter, Service Improvement Manager
	e-mail:	cwinter@syfire.gov.uk
	Tel no:	0114 253 2224