

Fire and Rescue Services Scrutiny Committee

3 June 2020

Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) inspection report and revisit

Report by Director of Law and Assurance

Summary

Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) produced its report on the inspection of West Sussex Fire & Rescue Services (WSFRS) in June 2019. The report and the proposals to address areas for improvement were subject to scrutiny by the former Environment Communities and Fire Select Committee. A later inspection re-visit was carried out and its findings have been summarised in a letter to the Council. The Committee will be updated by the Cabinet Member on the WSFRS improvement programme and the outcome of the recent visit. The Committee may wish to confirm its proposals for scrutiny in the context of the service outcomes it wishes to focus on and those set by the Cabinet Member.

Focus for scrutiny

The Committee is asked to:

- Confirm the priorities for scrutiny and service outcomes it wishes to focus on and to identify those areas requiring greatest or earliest attention
- Consider how members may obtain assurance as to the effectiveness of measures taken or planned to address the areas of improvement
- Identify any particular data or evidence it wishes to receive to assist its future consideration of these matters, including areas which may require external evidence.
- Settle how it wishes to undertake specific scrutiny tasks or information gathering if not through the consideration of written reports at committee.

The Chairman will summarise the output of the debate for consideration by the Committee.

Background

- 1.1 HMICFRS assess services on their effectiveness, efficiency and how well they look after their people. These are then judged as outstanding, good, requires improvement or inadequate based on inspection findings and professional judgment across the year using questions focused on core areas of FRS work.
- 1.2 On 20 June 2019, HMICFRS published its inspection report for West Sussex Fire & Rescue Service (WSFRS).
- 1.3 The report found that **effectiveness** of West Sussex Fire and Rescue Service "requires improvement", **efficiency** "requires improvement" and the way it looks after its **people** is "inadequate". The report had a number of recommendations for immediate, medium-term and longer-term actions. A comprehensive improvement plan was developed and has been in progress

- for several months. Further external visits have taken place and their outputs captured in letters back to the Council.
- 1.4 The inspection report and improvement plan were subject to scrutiny at a special meeting of the Environment, Communities and Fire Select Committee on [10 July 2019](#) (<https://westsussex.moderngov.co.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CIId=163&MIId=2205&Ver=4>). The Committee noted the positive progress made and supported the Improvement Plan.
 - 1.5 The Improvement Plan was subject to further scrutiny by the Committee at two further meetings, [20 September 2019](#) (<https://westsussex.moderngov.co.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CIId=163&MIId=2092&Ver=4>) and [13 January 2020](#) (<https://westsussex.moderngov.co.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CIId=163&MIId=2094&Ver=4>). At these meetings, members covered the full scope of improvement plans rather than focusing on specific areas or identifying subjects for priority. No additional or focused work was planned outside meetings of the Committee.
 - 1.6 The establishment of the new Committee provides an opportunity to refresh the approach to scrutiny in terms of the focus of the Committee's business over the next year and how it intends to discharge its work in order to achieve the impact it settles as its aim.

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Appendices:

Appendix A: HMIC Inspection Report

Appendix B: HMIC revisit Letter

Appendix C: FRS Improvement Plan

Background papers

None