

HMICFRS Inspection of North Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service (Spring 2022)

The Commissioner has been requested to provide Members with a response to His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary, Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) inspection of North Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service, conducted in Spring 2022, with the final report published on 20th January 2023.

The following report provides the Commissioner's response to the inspection findings as well as the response from the Chief Fire Officer. North Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service (NYFRS) will attend the meeting to provide further detail verbally should Members have any questions specific to the delivery of actions to date.

Background

His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) independently assesses the effectiveness and efficiency of Fire and Rescue Services. It is designed to provide information about how the local Fire and Rescue Service is performing in several important areas, in a way that is comparable with other services across the country.

The Inspection came at a time of significant transition for NYFRS in Spring 2022. HMICFRS visited NYFRS to consider its effectiveness, efficiency and how the Service looks after its staff using data and information from between Spring 2019 and Spring 2022.

North Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service received the following judgements:

Effectiveness: The extent to which the service is effective at keeping people safe and secure from fire and other risks has been graded as requires improvement

Efficiency: The extent to which the service is efficient at keeping people safe and secure from fire and other risks has been graded as inadequate

People: The extent to which the service looks after its staff has been graded as inadequate

The report identifies a number of areas for improvement throughout but recognises the Service as being good at preventing fires and other emergencies and good in its response to major and multi-agency incidents.

Response

Whilst this is a disappointing outcome from the inspection, the Commissioner and Chief Fire Officer welcome the report and the challenge and scrutiny from HMICFRS.

The Commissioner and Chief Fire Officer are very aware of what needs to be done. When HMICFRS left in Spring 2022 work started on making the required and necessary improvements and these continue to be made through a robust action plan. HMICFRS will revisit the end of January and the Commissioner and Chief Fire Officer welcome their return to report on the good work which has been completed.

The Commissioner and Chief Fire Officer individually released statements in response to the report on the day it was published (below). They also produced a short video providing a joint, public response to the report <https://www.northyorkshire-pfcc.gov.uk/news/hmicfrsjan2023/>

Both the Commissioner and Chief Fire Officer were available for media interviews on the morning of the report publication and spoke to five media outlets including; Greatest Hits Radio, ITV Calendar, Harrogate Informer, BBC Look North and BBC Radio York.

The Commissioner's January Public Accountability Meeting on Thursday 26th January 2:30pm-4:00pm will be entirely dedicated to the NYFRS response to the inspection. Panel Members are encouraged to watch the meeting where the Service will provide a detailed response, to the public on the inspection findings. This will include progress to date and future actions and plans. The meeting can be viewed on YouTube via the following link <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xRdv7TfMgY>



Commissioner Zoë responds to HMICFRS's latest report on North Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service

“As Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner for York and North Yorkshire it is my statutory responsibility to set strategic priorities on behalf of the public, annual budgets, and hold the Chief Fire Officer to account for the services that North Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service (NYFRS) delivers to keep our communities safe and feeling safe.

“I welcome regular inspections from His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS), because the reports are an independent and rigorous assessment which I can use to ensure our Fire and Rescue Service becomes an Outstanding Service. I am confident that NYFRS will become an exemplary Service and we are already on our journey to achieve that, I am committed to our success.

“It is extremely important for the public to understand that North Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service keeps people safe as noted in the report where the Service is recognised as being good at preventing fires and other emergencies and good in its response to major and multi-agency incidents.

“Although major areas for improvement have been identified, the report recognises the great work being done by firefighters and staff to keep our communities safe. And I want to pay tribute to our courageous and dedicated fire personnel, who have my full support as they go about their vital work - as well as playing their part in improving our Service.

“Turning to the specifics of the report, I want to start by making it clear that there has been significant progress and improvements since the inspection;

- I have appointed an inspirational Chief Fire Officer and Deputy Chief Fire Officer who have in turn built a new Strategic Leadership Team. I am very confident that together, we will lead the Service into a strong and sustainable future, focused on the safety of our communities and valuing our people.
- We have worked closely with the Inspectorate since their visit to demonstrate that every penny of the public's money has been applied wisely, and that financial planning is sound.
- As Commissioner I know that the Service has been underfunded for a generation and I have negotiated hard and been successful with central government for fairer funding for our Fire Service and I will continue to make the case.

“Together, the Chief and I have already implemented a rigorous ongoing programme of improvement. The Chief has also put into place immediate plans to address the two causes of concern raised which HMICFRS will review later this month when we welcome them back on 30

January. At which point we will demonstrate our progress since they were last here. On behalf of the public, I have been clear with the Chief Fire Officer that I will be very disappointed if their re-inspection does not produce more positive findings.

“North Yorkshire Fire & Rescue Service is transforming and modernising, to become an exemplary Service. Fresh thinking and brave decisions are being made. For example, through the community risk profile the Service now properly understands the likelihood and severity of fires, road traffic collisions, water related incidents, and other emergencies and also the root causes of risk which result from age, deprivation and other factors. This informed the development of a new Risk and Resource Model, which looked at the way North Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service would seek to deploy its people, equipment and resources, based on the most extensive study ever undertaken of community risk assessment across North Yorkshire and York. Following consultation with the public, I made the decision in September 2022 to implement the Risk and Resource Model that will continue to keep the public safe whilst enabling increased prevention and protection work across communities, permanent investment into prevention and protection teams and improve the availability of On-call fire engines in rural areas. I am delighted that HMICFRS have rated the Service as Good in relation to its Prevention work.

“The Chief Fire Officer and I are united in our focus on the Inspectorate’s findings in relation to the way the Service treats its own people. We are already driving forward necessary improvements, so that we build a more inclusive working culture. For example, we are investing to improve how we look after our people and the environment in which they work. I expect North Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service to be an employer of choice with a clear people focus that develops leadership, integrity, and inclusivity, and I will be monitoring the progress that is fundamental to this aim, as part of my scrutiny and the delivery of my Fire and Rescue Plan.

“Prevention work will be further strengthened by investment in 2023 with an increase in roles which tackle the root causes of danger to communities and deliver targeted activities to help stop emergencies from happening. This is absolutely in line with the priorities in my Fire and Rescue Plan.¹

“I am assured by a robust action plan and commitment from the Chief Fire Officer to address all areas of improvement. I will hold the Service to account for delivery.

“To do so, I have already deepened my scrutiny and accountability ahead of the next inspection. We will do so transparently and frankly – beginning immediately. On Thursday 26 January my Public Accountability Meeting (PAM) with the Service will be devoted entirely to this report and the progress made since the inspection in Spring 2022. I expect the Chief Fire Officer and his Senior Strategic Leadership Team to make clear to our communities the improvements which have been made since the inspection and the further improvements that are needed, and when these will be delivered.

“The PAM meeting will be broadcast live on the internet on Thursday 26th January at 2.30pm and the documents for this will be published today for the public to read. Please watch the session if you can and if not, a recording will be available on my website.

“In addition, I encourage any member of the public to send questions or concerns for us to address during the live meeting. Please email info@northyorkshire-pcc.gov.uk or to ask a question during the live broadcast, post your question on Twitter using #NYscrutiny

“The people of York and North Yorkshire can be confident that should they require their Fire and Rescue Service in an emergency, the right people and support will come. North Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service continues to be a reliable service with exceptional people, often risking their own lives to save the lives of the public.”

Public Accountability Meeting Thursday 26th January

2:30pm-4:00pm

Details: <https://bit.ly/PAMJan2023>



NORTH YORKSHIRE FIRE & RESCUE SERVICE

NEWS RELEASE

media@northyorksfire.gov.uk

Title: Statement from Jonathan Dyson, Chief Fire Officer, on the HMICFRS Report.

The report by His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary, Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) has today (20/1/23) published their report on the most recent inspection of North Yorkshire Fire & Rescue Service.

The inspection was conducted in spring 2022. Overall, our service has been assessed as:

- Effectiveness requires improvement
- Efficiency inadequate
- People inadequate

We welcome the challenge and scrutiny from HMICFRS and value the independent nature of the Inspectorate. While this is a very disappointing outcome, it is not a reflection of the hard work and dedication that our staff show, every day, to keeping our communities safe, and feeling safe. The Inspectors have said that we are good at preventing fires and other risks and responding to major and multi-agency incidents.

Much of what the Inspectors have focused on relates to service-level policies and practices.

We do need to acknowledge that the Inspection came at a time of significant change for our service. We were just coming out of Covid and transitioning to a new Chief Fire Officer.

Since taking up my position as Chief Fire Officer in July 2022 I remain very aware about what needs to improve and I'm confident that, along with my newly appointed leadership team, we'll deliver the HMICFRS improvement plans and service transformation. We are absolutely committed to making significant progress over the next two years.

Jonathan Dyson

Chief Fire Officer, North Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service

The Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner is holding a Public Accountability Meeting on Thursday 26 January at 2:30pm – 4:00pm. which will cover the Service's response to the findings of the recent inspection report.

Please visit the [PFCC's website](#) for information on how you can submit your questions and comments and view the meeting on-line.