



JARC Governance Highlight Report

Report of the Chief Fire Officer

Author: R Barber	Organisation: Staffordshire Fire & Rescue Service (SFRS)
Contact: 01785 898664 r.barber@staffordshirefire.gov.uk	Date of meeting: Sept 2025

Introduction

This report is intended to provide information and assurance to JARC on the actions being taken around the following:

1. HMICFRS reports and recommendations
2. Internal reports and recommendations
3. Other External reports recommendations (as appropriate)
4. Strategic Risk Register

An overview of the above areas is provided, with a focus on those matters that have been considered to represent higher level risks to the organisation or which ETAP have requested a specific update on.

Recommendation to JARC

- That the information within this report be noted for information / discussion.
- That any matters requiring more detailed scrutiny be raised for inclusion in the next Chief Fire Officer's report to JARC.





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1 HMICFRS Reports and Recommendations

HMICFRS Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Service 2023-25 Effectiveness, Efficiency and People (5 AFIs)

Progress has been made on these **five** recommendations; with **one** of the areas now considered to be addressed. Actions are scrutinised by Service Delivery Board (SDB) prior to sign-off as complete. Scrutiny will remain ongoing until improvements are embedded.

**Now that the scope of the work is fully understood the Target Delivery Dates for the Areas for Improvement (AFIs) have been revised as per the table below to reflect more realistic goals. All AFI Target Delivery Dates were initially set 12 months (17/09/2025) following publication of our HMICFRS report.*

Ref	Area for Improvement (AFI)	Status	Target Delivery Date	Progress Notes
01	The service should make sure all staff understand how to identify vulnerability and safeguard vulnerable people.	On Track	31/05/2026*	<p>Following a review, all operational staff will now receive Level 2 safeguarding training, with regular refreshers. Training began in May 2025 and will run for approximately 12 months. Whole-time crews are trained during day shifts, while on-call crews attend sessions on drill nights, with flexible locations to support attendance.</p> <p>Funding for face-to-face delivery was approved in March 2025. Options for refresher training - either in-person or online - will be considered after the initial rollout.</p> <p>Although the programme has been well received, operational pressures have caused a slower start. Of the 12 sessions held to date, six were completed successfully, while 6 were disrupted - resulting in a 50% disruption rate. So far, 47 personnel (9% of the total requirement) have completed the training. A further 58 sessions are planned over the next 10 months.</p>



				Completion of the training is expected by May 2026, at which point formal sign-off will be considered.
02	The service should make sure it has an effective quality assurance process, so staff carry out audits to a consistent standard.	On Track	31/03/2026*	<p>A review conducted in January 2025 confirmed that the Quality Assurance (QA) Policy is both suitable and sufficient. Systems to support QA activity are in place, with monthly reviews now embedded within Protection Managers meetings. QA monitoring is a standing agenda item, and performance assessment is scheduled for June 2025.</p> <p>The current reporting period concluded on 30 June 2025. Due to delays in qualification validation, some anticipated sampling activity was not required, as affected individuals were not actively engaged in audits. At the close of the period, 9 qualified personnel were actively auditing. Each has been observed by their line manager, with feedback documented in line with QA procedures.</p> <p>The next six-month sampling window has now commenced, with an estimated 12 sampling activities expected. Annual internal monitoring remains scheduled for Q4 2025/26, and discussions are ongoing to arrange an external peer review with Shropshire Fire and Rescue Service in the coming months.</p> <p>To fully evidence compliance with the QA policy, all required activities must be completed at least once. <i>This process will take over a year, with formal sign-off anticipated by March 2026.</i></p>
03	The service should make sure all staff understand the benefits of equality, diversity, inclusion and positive action and their role in promoting them.	On Track	31/12/2026*	<p>An Equality Diversity and Inclusion (ED&I) awareness presentation has been developed, with the service-wide launch in June 2025. The programme will run for 12–18 months as face-to-face sessions across the service. An initial session delivered to wholtime recruits in February 2025 was well received, and feedback has been used to enhance the content. To date, two sessions have been completed (Lichfield/Leek), with 13 more scheduled for the remainder of the year. Engagement has been positive, particularly among the participating watches.</p>



				<p>Active Bystander training has also progressed, with six additional sessions promoted via internal communications to reach those yet to attend. Sessions have been scheduled at varied times to support on-call staff availability. So far, 44 staff members have completed the training across four sessions, with two more sessions available. Staff unable to attend due to leave or shift patterns are being identified and will be prioritised for future sessions, including those planned for new starters. The training is expected to be delivered annually.</p> <p><i>Anticipated that delivery to all wholetime and on-call will be complete by December 2026.</i></p>
04	The service should make sure it has robust processes in place to carry out equality impact assessments and review any actions agreed as a result.	Completed and signed off	17/09/2025	<p>This recommendation was signed off as complete at SDB 03/03/2025:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) training on Equality Impact Assessments (EqIA) has now been completed, with nominated Champions across the service. EqIA guidance and a 'How to' guide has been created and is available to all staff via SharePoint.
05	The service should put in place an open and fair process to identify, develop and support high-potential staff and aspiring leaders.	On Track	31/10/2025*	<p>The research phase for Learning and Development (L&D), running from October 2024 to January 2025, is now complete. This phase included a review of NFCC guidance and best practices from other Fire and Rescue Services (FRSs).</p> <p>A process and content document have been developed with input from HR and L&D, and consultation with representative bodies began on 19 May 2025, following a brief delay from the originally planned April timeline. A meeting to discuss potential content providers was held in early June. The consultation phase is now complete, and L&D is currently reviewing options for suitable training providers. This stage is expected to conclude by mid-July 2025. <i>A final check against the NFCC product is underway, with the training programme launch planned for October 2025.</i></p> <p>We now have some recommendations from L&D reference content. We are working with an organisation to understand a method for suitability criteria.</p>



HMICFRS Standards of Behaviour: The handling of misconduct in fire and rescue services
(15 National Recommendations)

Progress has been made on these **15** recommendations; with **12** areas now considered to be addressed. Actions are scrutinised by SDB prior to sign-off as complete. Scrutiny will remain ongoing until improvements are embedded.

**Now that the scope of the work for the service is fully understood in respect of the three outstanding recommendations the Target Delivery Dates for those recommendations will be revised as per the table below to reflect a more realistic goal. Initial dates set by HMICFRS for all FRSs in England do not consider individual FRS resources to implement these recommendations.*

Ref	Area for Improvement / Recommendation	Status	Target Delivery Date	Progress Notes
01	By 1 February 2025 , chief fire officers should, as a priority, make sure their staff are aware of, and follow the Core Code of Ethics. FRSs should build the code into all relevant policies and practices.	Completed and signed off	01/02/2025	This recommendation was signed off as complete (links to AFI 11 Round 2 inspection report): The Core Code of Ethics (CCoE) is now embedded in all HR policies, with Principal Officers championing specific elements. A HIVE Survey (independent company) assesses employee understanding and sentiment, with plans for ongoing use. A Grievance/Disciplinary Tracker monitors trends to ensure alignment with CCoE. Daily conversations reinforce the expected values.
02	By 1 February 2025 , chief fire officers should make sure a policy for probationary staff is in place. This policy should make clear that FRSs can immediately dismiss probationers who fail to meet the required standards of behaviour set out in the Core Code of Ethics and the Code of Ethics fire standard.	Off Track	31/10/2025*	Policies have been reviewed, and a standalone Probation Policy developed, aligning with updated legislation now expected in 2026. In the interim, probationary processes have been strengthened and guidance on effectively managing new recruits and probationers will be delivered. Paper to SDB on 03/03/2025 requesting sign-off - however the Board asked that further dialogue takes place between HR & FBU before this



				<p>recommendation can be signed off - we did not consider it ready to be regarded as Business as Usual (BAU).</p> <p>Further review has been carried out about the way we conduct Probationary reviews. As a result of feedback from sessions delivered to the Ops. forum we established that further training is needed to consolidate understanding of the process. Training is scheduled for 25th September and 2nd October for all Station Managers and equivalent. Supporting documentation is currently being developed. <i>Anticipated that this recommendation will be ready for sign-off as complete (BAU) by the end of October 2025.</i></p>
03	<p>By 1 May 2025, chief fire officers should make sure their workforce plans allow staff to be moved from a wholetime watch to a different watch or station, within their contractual requirements, proactively and reactively as required.</p> <p>By 1 May 2025, chief fire officers should also make sure firefighters who are promoted are posted to a different watch or station, including when the promotion is temporary for two months or more. If this is not possible, chief fire officers should show how the risks of reinforcing a negative culture have been addressed.</p>	Off Track	22/09/2025*	<p>The service maintains an internal transfer process to support employees seeking moves between watches or stations, while also retaining the ability to initiate moves to meet operational and organisational needs. SDB requested further dialogue between representative bodies and the Workforce Planning Board to clarify how the process operates in practice. A working group has since been established to explore this in more detail.</p> <p>Following recent promotion processes, operational crewing moves were successfully negotiated during a 'moving day' meeting on 8 May, attended by Group Managers, the Resource Manager, and HR. A follow-up meeting with unions is scheduled to agree a collaborative approach. Paper to be taken to SDB 22/09/2025.</p>
04	By 1 February 2025 , chief fire officers should make sure their FRS create or have access to a dedicated professional standards function to oversee the investigation of concerns raised within a service or from an external source. This should oversee cases to make sure they are	Completed and signed off	01/02/2025	<p>This recommendation was signed off as complete at SDB 03/03/2025:</p> <p>The terms of reference have been developed in collaboration with our consultant and Hereford & Worcester Fire & Rescue Service, with consultant providing independence in the process.</p>



	investigated in a fair and transparent way, manage complex cases directly and act as a point of contact for all staff involved.			<p>The Board members have been selected, and the first meeting to discuss the purpose and process took place in February.</p> <p>Future meetings have been scheduled to occur every six weeks, during which live cases will be reviewed by the Board.</p>
05	<p>By 1 November 2024, chief fire officers should make sure all staff understand how to raise a concern and use grievance and whistle-blowing processes. Chief fire officers should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •make sure staff know how FRSs will handle responses and maintain confidentiality and anonymity; and •explain how staff can access FRSs' whistle-blowing capability and the difference between whistle-blowing and other processes for raising concerns. 	Completed and signed off	01/11/2024	<p>This recommendation was signed off as complete at SDB 03/12/2024: Whistleblowing, Grievances, Say So, and HIVE details are now on the Staff Room intranet, with all policies accessible.</p> <p>An article in <i>Burning Issues</i> (internal publication) clarifies the differences between these terms.</p> <p>Further communication reinforces the confidentiality of HIVE/Say So.</p> <p>Terminology is now included in Middle Manager Training Modules to strengthen understanding.</p>
06	<p>By 1 February 2025, chief fire officers should make sure a programme of training is in place for all supervisors and managers on how to manage staff performance and welfare and how to raise an issue. It should be supported by relevant policies and procedures. Training should include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •staff welfare and absence management; •the process for managing individual staff performance, addressing poor performance and potential misconduct issues; •how to handle difficult conversations and resolve issues informally, if appropriate, when a concern is identified; and •clarifying the role of HR services in helping 	Off Track	31/12/2026*	<p>This area remains a work in progress, reflecting the complexity and scale of the task, as well as the diverse skills and needs across the service. Input has been sought from other FRSs to understand how they are addressing similar requirements.</p> <p>To support a more structured approach, a skills matrix and gap analysis is being considered. This will help identify priority areas and inform a more targeted training strategy aligned with the NFCC Leadership Framework.</p> <p>A training schedule has been developed by HR and will be delivered through Operational Forums, followed by two dedicated HR Training Days in September and October 2025. This schedule will be reviewed and refined following completion of the skills matrix. An update paper was presented to SDB on 3 March 2025. As the training programme had not</p>



	<p>managers to deal with staff concerns and misconduct issues.</p> <p>Chief fire officers should make sure all managers and supervisors attend the training programme.</p>			<p>yet commenced, this area was not yet considered ready for business-as-usual status.</p> <p>In the interim:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Welfare Officer training has been delivered to managers to support staff involved in employee relations processes. Capability management - covering absence and performance - will be addressed through upcoming Operational Forums and Middle Management training sessions, with delivery aligned to the completion of relevant policies. <p>HR Manager developing a detailed 12-month training plan to incorporate all elements of this recommendation. This will be brought for consideration at a future Board following completion of the scheduled HR training days so that feedback and learning can be considered.</p>
07	<p>By 1 May 2025, chief fire officers should make sure the policies and processes for misconduct are consistent for all staff and are fairly applied within their respective conditions of employment.</p> <p>By 1 August 2025, the National Joint Council for Local Authority Fire and Rescue Services and the National Joint Council for Local Government Services, supported by NFCC, should make misconduct processes consistent for all staff irrespective of the terms and conditions of their employment.</p>	Completed and signed off	01/05/2025	<p>This recommendation was signed off as complete at SDB 03/03/2025: Linked to progress against AFI 19 Round 2 inspection (complete) re. consistency in application of HR policies.</p> <p>The HR Tracker, which has been verified by an external consultant, will continue to be used to ensure consistency across cases and to manage their completion in a prompt manner. It will also be reviewed by the Professional Standards Board, which will provide feedback to drive improvements.</p> <p>All policies related to misconduct are aligned with the ACAS Code of Practice, and when reviewed, they adhere to this guidance. Unions have been consulted throughout the process.</p>
08	<p>By 1 November 2024, chief fire officers should make sure all allegations of misconduct are handled in a consistent way and staff have</p>	Completed and signed off	01/11/2024	<p>This recommendation was signed off as complete at SDB 03/12/2024: The misconduct process is under continuous review, incorporating findings from the thematic report. Key changes include an appeals panel,</p>



	<p>confidence in misconduct processes. Chief fire officers should carry out a full review of the processes, from initial identification of a misconduct issue through to the resolution or outcome. This should include a review of how FRSSs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • monitor and manage investigations; • maintain accurate records; and • adhere to required timescales. 			<p>external investigators when needed, and improved record-keeping. Consultation with unions is ongoing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Investigations: Managers assess misconduct with HR support, with complex cases referred for external advice. A new supervisory training course includes sessions with an employment lawyer. • Record-Keeping: Cases are tracked in an HR system and stored in employee files for oversight. • Timescales: HR monitors cases weekly, adjusting timelines when necessary while aiming to meet policy deadlines.
09	<p>By 1 August 2025, chief fire officers should introduce a case management system if they do not already have one. The case management system should allow data to be produced that will help them to better understand and oversee misconduct cases in their services.</p>	Completed and signed off	01/08/2025	<p>This recommendation was signed off as complete at SDB 03/03/2025:</p> <p>The HR department has been using a tracking sheet for several years, which has now been significantly enhanced and improved.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cases are reviewed weekly. • Trends are monitored. • Themes are reported quarterly. <p>An independent consultant reviewed the Tracker and provided recommendations on how it could be improved. These recommendations have been incorporated into the process.</p> <p>Given the current financial constraints, our recommendation is to continue using the current method of review without incurring any other costs.</p>
10	<p>By 1 May 2025, chief fire officers should make sure their FRSSs have enough capacity to carry out their misconduct investigations. They should consider using external investigators or a similar independent resource to support the process if required.</p>	Completed and signed off	10/05/2025	<p>This recommendation was signed off as complete at SDB 03/03/2025:</p> <p><i>Linked to Recommendation 04 in Values and Culture report</i> (signed off as Complete).</p> <p>In 2024, consideration was given to using an independent investigator within the service to review cases, with the aim to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide independence



				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enhance speed Offer a learning opportunity. <p>Two different independent approaches were trialled, with varying degrees of success. The outcome was that one of the providers delivered an excellent service, while the other failed to meet acceptable standards. This can be utilised as needed.</p>
11	<p>By 1 May 2025, chief fire officers should review the training their FRSs provide for supervisors and managers who investigate misconduct issues at all levels. Chief fire officers should make sure:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> all staff who carry out investigations receive adequate training to carry out the task; a programme of refresher training and ongoing support is available so that staff can maintain a level of competence; and it is clear how services' HR provision, staff associations and any trade union representative or fellow employee will support the investigation process. 	Completed and signed off	01/05/2025	<p>This recommendation was signed off as complete at SDB 03/03/2025:</p> <p>Training for Investigation Officers with Employment Consultant, which was previously conducted on an ad hoc basis, is now mandatory within the Middle Management Training programme. This training runs annually, with non-operational fire staff also invited to attend.</p> <p>HR Officers work closely with all Investigating Officers to ensure consistency and provide supportive feedback throughout the process, aiming to improve the quality of investigation reports.</p> <p>Professional Standards Boards (Recommendation 04) will be used to review all drafted investigation reports, offering learning opportunities and ensuring quality assurance.</p> <p>Training on the production of written reports will be provided during the HR Training Day, including the introduction of new templates to streamline processes where appropriate. A list of all trained investigators has been created to ensure a fair distribution of cases.</p> <p>The investigation process is clearly defined within the Disciplinary process which is found on our staff intranet.</p>
12	<p>With immediate effect, chief fire officers should make sure all staff are aware of the welfare support, including occupational health support,</p>	Completed and signed off	01/11/2024	<p>This recommendation was signed off as complete at SDB 03/12/2024:</p> <p>Welfare support is now formally offered to all involved in investigations, including witnesses, interviewers, and those at the centre of allegations.</p>



	that is available to staff involved in misconduct processes. Chief fire officers should encourage all staff involved in misconduct processes to access this support, whether they are an alleged perpetrator, complainant, witness, investigator or decision-maker. Welfare personnel should be independent of the investigation and have been appropriately trained for this role.			<p>Key Updates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HR has been briefed in weekly meetings. • Welfare support is now included in all investigation, grievance, and disciplinary documents. • Training with Occupational Health will be rolled out to all Support Officers. <p>The Disciplinary Policy has been updated to reflect this provision.</p>
13	<p>By 1 November 2024, fire and rescue authorities and chief fire officers should consider varying the approach to hearing appeals so that appeals for complex or serious cases are heard by a panel rather than one person.</p> <p>By 1 February 2025, fire and rescue authorities and chief fire officers should make sure all FRS managers and members of fire and rescue authorities who hear appeals receive appropriate training. Chief fire officers should make sure FRSs have a consistent approach to hearing appeals.</p>	Completed and signed off	01/11/2024	<p>This recommendation was signed off as complete at SDB 03/12/2024:</p> <p>The Disciplinary Policy now allows independent personnel from the Commissioner's Office on the Appeals Panel if needed.</p> <p>External legal training has been provided to independent panel members for consistency and effectiveness.</p> <p>The HR Team has been briefed on this change.</p>
14	<p>By 1 November 2025, chief fire officers should implement a process that makes sure they can oversee and scrutinise their FRS's performance relating to misconduct issues. This process should provide:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a strategic overview of performance and analysis of trends, including disproportionality; • regular reporting of issues, outcomes and trends to the fire and rescue authority; and • identification of learning outcomes and how 	Completed and signed off	01/11/2025	<p>Performance is tracked through public performance meetings, internal governance board reports, and the HR tracker.</p> <p>The HR Manager also reports on it during senior leadership team performance meetings.</p>



	they will be shared with FRS staff, to prevent repeat behaviours.			
15	<p>By 1 February 2025, chief fire officers should put in place a process for sharing learning from misconduct cases that have been resolved while preserving the confidentiality of all parties involved. Any learning should feed into the national system, when established.</p> <p>By 1 May 2025, NFCC should establish a system for sharing learning from more serious cases of misconduct with FRS staff. The information shared should preserve the anonymity and confidentiality of all parties involved. The College of Fire and Rescue, once it is established, should take responsibility for maintaining this system.</p>	Completed and signed off	01/02/2025	<p>This recommendation was signed off as complete at SDB 03/03/25:</p> <p><i>Links to Recommendation 11</i> - HR Training will serve as the forum for sharing case learnings, with plans to make this an annual event.</p> <p>Sharing cases more often than annually may risk compromising confidentiality.</p>

2025-27 HMICFRS inspection programme and framework

Earlier in the year, HMICFRS published its [2025-27 Fire and Rescue Service inspection programme and framework](#) which will include greater focus on:

- How well FRSs lead their people, including leaders at all levels of the organisation
- Building on the important work done to improve values and culture
- Understanding and evaluating how each FRS is affected by its Fire and Rescue Authorities governance, oversight and scrutiny arrangements (in our case the impact of the Commissioner's governance on the way we deliver our services)

1. Inspection programme overview

- Completion of Round 3: all 44 FRSs have now been inspected, with 20 revisits, and thematic reports published (Values & Culture and Misconduct)
- 40 FRS reports published to date with the rest due to be published in the coming weeks.
- Launch of a new inspection cycle with phased planning for flexibility.
- First inspection reports from this round expected Spring 2026; final reports by Spring 2028.

2. Methodological Changes

- Reduction in principal questions from 11 to 10 (Characteristics of "Good")
- Inclusion of financial, geographic, and demographic context on circumstances in which FRSs deliver in reports.
- New inspection activities include: interviews with audit committee, trade union and leadership focus groups, and desktop reviews on leadership, communications, and misconduct.

3. Governance and Oversight

- Commissioner's office will not be directly inspected, the review will consider the impact of its governance on the service
- Emphasis on internal governance: scrutiny arrangements, delegation schemes, and reporting to the Commissioner's office.
- No formal ratings or direct recommendations will be issued.

4. Key Lines of Enquiry (Characteristics of Good)

In terms of Effectiveness and Efficiency governance should ensure robust financial oversight, strategic risk management, and performance monitoring. For People we need to be able to demonstrate that culture, wellbeing, and staff feedback mechanisms are supported.

Effectiveness: HMICFRS will -

- assess how well the FRS understands and manages fire and emergency risks.
- examine whether governance supports local risk awareness and helps shape service priorities.
- will comment on the quality and consistency of updates provided to the Commissioner on prevention, protection, and response activities.

Efficiency: HMICFRS will -

- Assesses how well resources are used to manage risk.
- Evaluate strategic oversight of management and internal controls.
- Review how senior officers are held accountable through scheme of delegation.

People: HMICFRS will -

- Assess how well the FRS promotes a positive culture and supports staff wellbeing.
- Review governance oversight of people strategies and conduct.
- Evaluate systems for feedback, complaints, and grievances.
- Check if the Commissioner receives regular updates on people issues.

5. New Documentation Requirements

In addition to those documents requested in previous inspection rounds. HMICFRS will want to see:

- Policies on leadership, recruitment, complaints, and misconduct.
- Governance meeting minutes, budget reports, and project documentation.
- Specific project documents (to be submitted for scrutiny early in inspections).

6. Desktop Reviews and Focus Groups

HMICFRS have tested new areas of its inspection methods to ensure they are fit for purposes. The evidence from these pilots will not inform any judgments / reports for those FRSs involved (Kent, Merseyside, Essex, Cornwall). New or refined activities will include:

Discipline & Grievance Review

- Covers: discipline, grievance, whistleblowing, bullying, harassment, discrimination, vetting and barring.
- Includes document review and interviews.

Communications & Engagement Review

- Assesses internal communications via intranet and team interviews.
- Focuses on how services engage with staff and stakeholders.

Recruitment & Promotions Review

- Examines recruitment and promotion processes.
- Includes file reviews and interviews, with attention to safeguarding (DBS checks).

Leadership Review

- Evaluates leadership recruitment, performance, and development.
- Includes document and file reviews, plus interviews.

Major Incident Desktop

- Two-part review: planning and incident response.
- Links to debrief and competence assessments.

Leadership Focus Group

- Targets middle and senior managers (GM/AM level).
- Explores leadership behaviours, culture, wellbeing, and strategic communication.

Data collection update

This exercise ran from 22nd April to 30th May 2025. The service has submitted our response. Working with its technical advisory group, the data request process was streamlined. FRSs will now only be asked to submit data once a year in spring, rather than twice annually. However, HMICFRS may request additional data in autumn if needed to support the likes of thematic inspections or lines of enquiry.

NEXT STEPS...

2025-27 inspections timetable has been released with the inspection dates for the first 14 FRSs confirmed. The date for Staffordshire's inspection has not yet been confirmed. Based on those dates already confirmed, we do not expect this to be before April 2026, but this may be subject to change.

Over the coming months we will work to prepare managers, crews and teams for our inspection so that they are aware of what is expected from them and to answer any queries they may have as best we can.

His Majesty's Chief Inspector Sir Andy Cooke's annual assessment of FRSs, **the State of Fire and Rescue report** will be published later this Summer.



2 JARC Thematic Reports and Recommendations

Summary of live ETAP Thematic action plans

JARC Review Title	Recommendations	Comments
No Current outstanding action plans to report		

3 Other External Reports and Recommendations

Summary of other reports

Report Title
Manchester Arena Inquiry
<p>The Manchester Arena Inquiry Volume 2 Emergency Response, was published November 2022. There are 149 recommendations covering all the Emergency Services involved and the Local Resilience Forums. It is important to note that Staffordshire Fire & Rescue Service (SFRS) has taken the opportunity to include other recommendations from other services and multi-agency related recommendations to expand on the opportunity to learn and improve our procedures.</p> <p>SFRS has developed an action plan including 40 actions, with an additional 17 actions from our shared Fire Control, which West Midlands Fire Service will be taking the lead with our involvement and scrutiny.</p> <p>All 40 actions have now been completed and scrutinised by our Operational Assurance department. Fire Control have 17 actions, 9 are complete with 8 in progress. All 8 are 90% complete. We will continue to monitor this through our shared service performance mtgs with West Midlands FRS.</p> <p>The main themes include the following areas:</p> <p>Sharing of major incident plans</p> <p>A multi-agency group has been set up to move this work forward, SFRS has rewritten our major incident plan and has been shared through resilience direct, so all related partners can view. Training with each multi-agency plans now been completed</p>

Record keeping

The scope of this work includes providing the training and tools to enable officers to keep relevant records of decisions. New larger books have been introduced to support the use of note taking, bespoke training to all officers including the use of trigger notes to support contemporaneous note taking.

Sharing of plans

Each organisation has a set of site-specific tactical plans. A wider discussion has started following the Staffordshire Resilience Forum workshop, reference multi-agency tactical plans. SFRS will work with partners and the Civil Contingency Unit (CCU) to understand how this can be achieved. We currently have multi-agency plans for sites covered by the control of major accident hazards (COMAH) and sites such as waste sites, however we intend to expand these plans.

Joint Emergency Service Interoperability Programme (JESIP)

This area covers joint training and awareness of partners working together, to ensure shared situational awareness and shared communications. Currently the three blue light partners have relaunched joint training for all incident commanders and dates will continue to be programmed throughout 2025/26 and onwards. Two further Multi-Agency large scale exercises have taken place within 2025.

Grenfell phase 2 report

On the 4th September 2024 the phase two report from the Grenfell Tower inquiry was published. The Inquiry was established to examine the circumstances leading up to and surrounding the fire at Grenfell Tower on the night of 14 June 2017. Phase 1 focused on the factual narrative of the events on the night of 14 June 2017. The Grenfell Tower Inquiry's final hearings took place in November 2022. Phase 2 examines the causes of the fire, including how Grenfell Tower came to be in a condition which allowed the fire to spread in the way identified by Phase 1.

We have already seen many changes in fire and rescue services (FRSs) from the first report – issued in 2019 – and its 46 recommendations. As is made clear in the final report, we must maintain our focus on the Phase 1 recommendations as we turn to those in this final report. This includes those recommendations yet to be completed, but also to assure ourselves that those that have been completed are looked at again, with a fresh pair of eyes, and in the context of this final report. Our mission is to keep communities and firefighters safe. We are committed to delivering reform on behalf of the communities of Grenfell.

The report lists 58 Grenfell Tower Inquiry Phase 2 recommendations. SFRS have now completed all these actions, including a review of Grenfell 1 recommendations. Our Operational assurance team have reviewed all the actions and are currently assuring six actions to gather more evidence of completion.

4 Strategic Risk Register

Board Report Extract: Strategic Risk Quarterly Position

The Strategic Risk Register Board last met on 8th May, with the next scheduled meeting on 9th September 2025. This report provides an overview of the strategic risk landscape over the quarter, focusing on the ten identified risks. It highlights key developments, mitigation efforts, and the future outlook to ensure ETAP remains informed of the current risk environment and the effectiveness of our risk management strategies.

Our current risk posture

Moderate to Cautious: The service maintains a proactive but measured stance, prioritising safety, compliance, and operational continuity while cautiously exploring innovation and transformation.

Control Environment: Strong governance structures are in place, including a Strategic Risk Board, internal audit, and external inspection regimes (e.g., HMICFRS).

Risk Appetite: Low for risks impacting life safety, public trust, or statutory compliance; moderate for innovation, digital transformation, and workforce reform.

Major Changes

No risks have been removed or archived, indicating continued relevance and materiality of all identified strategic risks.

Two risks have reduced in score, reflecting improved control effectiveness and/or changes in the external or internal environment:

Environmental Strategy Implementation: Risk reduced from 16 to 12 following a full review and implementation of targeted actions.

Service Data Issues: Risk reduced from 12 to 9 due to updated business continuity planning and improved risk information from the West Midlands FRS project team.

Risk Concerns

The Board discussed ongoing financial and budgetary concerns, noting uncertainty around future funding allocations and cost pressures. Potential risk areas were identified, particularly in resource planning and capital investment. Greater clarity is expected in the next quarter following key financial reporting and external developments.

The Board acknowledged that the organisation's future outlook remains subject to change and committed to maintaining a cautious and responsive approach. Strategic planning and financial risk mitigation will be reassessed as more definitive information becomes available.

Strategic Risk Landscape

Strategic Risk Landscape

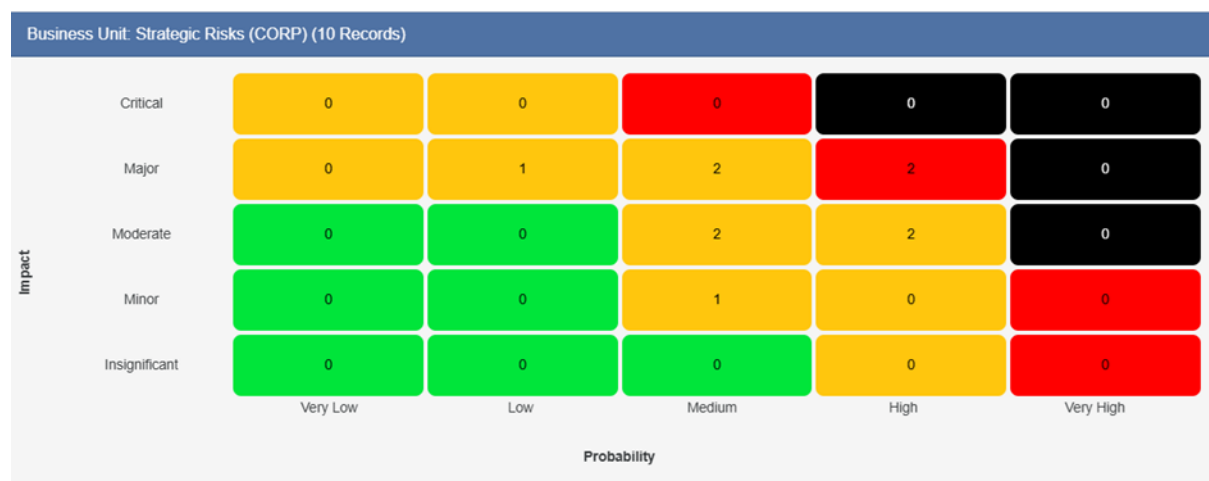
Total Strategic Risks: 10

Risks Removed or Archived: 0

Risks Reduced in Score: 2

Red (High) Risks: 2

Red Risk Summary



Red Risk Summary

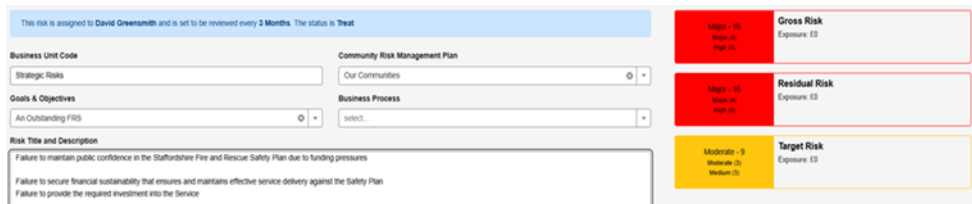
Title: Failure to maintain public confidence in the Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Safety Plan due to funding pressures

Failure to Maintain Public Confidence in the Safety Plan

Description: Risk to financial sustainability impacting service delivery.

Drivers: Inflation, funding volatility, operational cost increases.

Mitigations: Financial planning, efficiency measures, transformation projects.



This risk is assigned to David Greensmith and is set to be reviewed every 3 Months. The status is Threat.

Business Unit Code: Strategic Risks
Community Risk Management Plan: Our Communities

Goals & Objectives: An Outstanding FRS
Business Process: select...

Risk Title and Description: Failure to maintain public confidence in the Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Safety Plan due to funding pressures
Failure to secure financial sustainability that ensures and maintains effective service delivery against the Safety Plan
Failure to provide the required investment into the Service

Risk Levels: Major - 15, Major (H) - High (H), Moderate - 9, Moderate (H) - Medium (H)

Risk Status: Gross Risk Exposure: E0, Residual Risk Exposure: E0, Target Risk Exposure: E0

Shared Service Performance

Description: Insufficient contractual performance from service partners and providers affecting service delivery and organisational growth

Drivers: Mitigations in Place: SLA reviews, governance boards



This risk is assigned to Michelle Hickmott and is set to be reviewed every 3 Months. The status is Transfer.

Business Unit Code: Strategic Risks
Community Risk Management Plan: Our Communities

Goals & Objectives: Values, Culture and Reputation
Business Process: select...

Risk Title and Description: Shared Service Performance
Insufficient contractual performance from service partners and providers affecting service delivery and organisational growth

Risk Levels: Critical - 20, Critical (H) - High (H), Major - 15, Major (H) - High (H), Moderate - 9, Moderate (H) - Medium (H)

Risk Status: Gross Risk Exposure: E0, Residual Risk Exposure: E0, Target Risk Exposure: E0

Risk Mitigation Strategies

Mitigation strategies include robust internal controls, scenario planning, business continuity and disaster recovery plans, cyber security protocols, and financial stress testing. Risk transfer mechanisms such as insurance and stakeholder engagement are also employed to manage reputational risks. The Strategic Risk Board continues to promote transparency, accountability, and continuous improvement in risk governance.

Benchmarking

To ensure continuous improvement and alignment with sector best practices, Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Service benchmarks its strategic risk register against recent assessments from peer services across the UK. Common themes include the operational impact of climate change, the growing complexity of urban infrastructure, and the increasing prevalence of

mental health related emergencies. Risks such as lithium-ion battery fires, high rise building access, and malicious threats are now widely recognised across metropolitan and regional services. Additionally, corporate risks such as IT resilience and data quality are emerging as critical enablers of effective risk governance. By comparing risk profiles and mitigation strategies with services we can validate our own risk posture, identify gaps, and strengthen its strategic planning and resource allocation.

As part of our commitment to continuous improvement, a benchmarking review paper will be tabled at the next scheduled Strategic Risk Board meeting in September as a consideration item, enabling further discussion on sector wide risk trends and potential enhancements to our own strategic risk framework.

The Strategic Risk Register remains a vital tool in supporting informed decision making and organisational resilience. This quarter's review demonstrates a stable but cautious risk posture, with positive movement in key areas and ongoing vigilance around financial uncertainty. The Board's commitment to proactive risk management, supported by strong governance and targeted mitigation strategies, ensures that the organisation remains well-positioned to respond to emerging challenges. Continued monitoring and agile response will be essential as we approach the next review cycle in September.

END.