

## **His Majesty’s Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services Cause of Concern and Areas For Improvement Progress Report**

### **Report of the Chief Fire Officer**

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#### **1. Executive Summary**

This report details the Service’s progress towards improvements identified by His Majesty’s Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) Cause of Concern (CoC) and Areas For Improvement (AFIs).

#### **2. Recommendations**

The Performance and Scrutiny Committee is asked to note the report

#### **3. Background**

Following the June 2024 inspection by HMICFRS, the Service was graded in 11 areas and identified 1 Cause of Concern and 30 Areas for Improvement

Outstanding	Good	Adequate	Requires improvement	Inadequate
	Understanding the risk of fire and other emergencies	Preventing fires and other risks	Protecting the public through fire regulation	Making best use of resources
		Responding to fires and other emergencies	Making the FRS affordable now and in the future	
		Responding to major and multi-agency incidents	Promoting the right values and culture	
			Getting the right people with the right skills	
			Ensuring fairness and promoting diversity	
			Managing performance and developing leaders	




Service Improvement is monitoring the progress of the five recommendations from the CoC and all 30 AFIs within the action plan.

This report presents the Service's progress towards HMICFRS Cause of Concern and Areas For Improvement action plans, as recorded within the CoC and AFI Planner and (Risks Assumptions Issues Dependencies and Opportunities) RAIDO log.

Link to the [HMICFRS 2024 Report](#)

#### 4. HMICFRS Cause of Concern – Monitoring April 2026

##### Colour-Coding Key

Symbol	Status Category
	Limited Progress Evidenced since the previous update
	Moderate Progress Evidenced since the previous update
	Good Progress Evidenced since the previous update

**Efficiency** (How efficient is the service at keeping people safe and secure)

**Making best use of resources**

**Inadequate**


**Cause of Concern**



The service doesn't have adequate processes, controls or internal governance arrangements in place to manage strategic risks, performance and improvement plans.



**Recommendations**

The service should develop an action plan to make sure:

- 1 there are appropriate strategic oversight arrangements in place to manage risks, performance and improvement plans effectively;
- 2 the corporate risk register is actively used to mitigate and manage known risks;
- 3 all processes in place to support performance management are effective;
- 4 it has access to accurate data and analysis to support effective performance management; and
- 5 it has robust processes for reporting accurate and suitably detailed finance and risk information to the fire and rescue authority

CoC Ref	Theme / Domain	CoC Recommendation Description	Lead Officer	% Comp	Task Comp	Target Comp Date	Commentary
<b>Making best use of resources</b>							
1.1	Strategic oversight of risk, performance and improvement plans	there are appropriate strategic oversight arrangements in place to manage risks, performance and improvement plans effectively;	Deputy CFO Service Delivery	57%	13/23 	30/09/2026	Progress continues to strengthen strategic oversight of risk, performance and improvement plans. Activity recorded in the Planner includes development of an internal governance framework, progression of key organisational policies, approval of a revised service structure, and establishment of PMO arrangements. Performance management processes and access to data are being tracked, alongside active use of the corporate risk register. Recent agreement ensures that CPIs are featured within Domains and will support the creation of confidence statements. Dates revised to 30/09/ 2026, supported by regular executive-level scrutiny and no risks recorded.



CoC Ref	Theme / Domain	CoC Recommendation Description	Lead Officer	% Comp	Task Comp	Target Comp Date	Commentary
1.2	Manage known risk using corporate risk register	the corporate risk register is actively used to mitigate and manage known risks;	ACFO Corporate Services	73.3 %	22/30 	21/07/2026	Progress continues to ensure known risks are actively managed through the corporate risk register. Planner commentary records the consistent and embedded use of the register to capture, monitor and mitigate strategic risks linked to organisational change and performance. Risk management activity is supported by the use of RAIDO where appropriate and overseen through established SMT governance arrangements. Revised approach to Corporate Risk Management to be presented to Audit and Standards in July. Delivery remains on schedule, with no unmanaged or escalating risks recorded against this recommendation.
1.3	Effective performance management	all processes in place to support performance management are effective;	Deputy CFO Service Delivery	74%	14/19 	31/07/2026	Progress continues to ensure all processes supporting performance management are effective. Activity has progressed across all three Planner tasks, including development of a Service Planning and Performance Framework, alignment of individual performance arrangements, and strengthened leadership capability. Strategic approvals have been completed, revised IPDR processes and action plans have been rolled out, and leadership development activity has been aligned to NFCC pathways, supporting consistent performance management across the organisation. Recently SMT has approve the Organisational Delivery Framework




CoC Ref	Theme / Domain	CoC Recommendation Description	Lead Officer	% Comp	Task Comp	Target Comp Date	Commentary
1.4	Accurate data and analysis to support performance management	it has access to accurate data and analysis to support effective performance management	ACFO Corporate Services	80%	12/15 	31/12/2026	Progress continues to strengthen access to accurate data and analysis supporting effective performance management. Activity has focused on developing a clear Digital and Data Strategy, progressing delivery arrangements, and addressing skills and capacity requirements. Work is underway to improve organisational data capability, system security and staff understanding of data quality. All tasks remain active with revised timelines aligned to service priorities and performance needs.
1.5	Report accurate and detailed finance and risk information	it has robust processes for reporting accurate and suitably detailed finance and risk information to the fire and rescue authority	Chief Fire Officer	80%	21/26 	31/07/2026	Progress continues against Recommendation 5 to strengthen arrangements for reporting accurate and suitably detailed finance and risk information to the Fire and Rescue Authority. Activity has progressed across all Planner tasks, including improvements to budget setting, monitoring and reporting frameworks, strengthened statutory officer involvement in strategic governance, and the development of clearer approaches to budget allocation and monitoring. These actions support improved financial transparency, oversight and assurance to inform effective decision-making.




## 5. HMICFRS Areas for Improvement (AFI) - Monitoring April 2026

**Effectiveness** (How effective is the Service at keeping people safe and secure)

Understanding the risk of fire and other emergencies	Preventing fires and other emergencies	Protecting the public through fire regulation	Responding to fires and other emergencies	Responding to national risks
Good	Adequate	Requires Improvement	Adequate	Adequate



AFI Ref	Theme / Domain	AFI Description	Lead Officer	% Comp	Task Comp	Target Comp Date	Commentary
<b>Preventing fires and other emergencies</b>							
<b>AFI 1</b>	Evaluate Prevention	The service should evaluate its prevention activity, so it understands what is most effective.	AM Service Delivery	80%	20/25 	01/08/2026  (Date revised since last report)	Activity is focused on embedding a person-centred prevention model, strengthening evaluation capability and supporting systems. A project initiation and build phase has been completed, enabling delivery of the person-centred Safe & Well visit, which is now in progress and linked to quality assurance activity. Work is underway to develop prevention performance indicators and align evaluation within the prevention strategy. Supporting this, improvements to safeguarding referral processes are being progressed through digital development and testing.
<b>AFI 2</b>	Quality Assure Safe and Well visits	The service should make sure it quality assures its prevention activity, so staff carry out safe and well visits to an appropriate standard.	AM Service Delivery	72%	16/22 	30/09/2026	Activity focuses on embedding quality assurance across prevention delivery. Quality assurance of the person-centred Safe & Well visit is in progress, including assessor training, defined procedures and proportionate sampling. External feedback mechanisms and wider quality assurance methods across prevention activity have been completed, extending assurance beyond home visits. Work to embed quality assurance within the prevention strategy and to improve how quality findings are shared remains in progress.


AFI Ref	Theme / Domain	AFI Description	Lead Officer	% Comp	Task Comp	Target Comp Date	Commentary
<b>Protecting the public through fire regulation</b>							
<b>AFI 3</b>	Monitor Enforcement	The service should regularly monitor and check compliance with prohibition and enforcement notices that have been served	AM Service Delivery	91%	10/11 	31/07/2026	Activity has focused on strengthening assurance over regulatory enforcement activity. Systems and processes to ensure enforcement and prohibition notices are followed up within recommended timescales are complete, supported by live reporting and regular review. Departmental and corporate performance indicators are being developed to monitor regulatory compliance and alignment with objectives. Work is progressing to build and embed sufficient capacity within the Protection team to sustain these arrangements and support effective, ongoing compliance monitoring.
<b>AFI 4</b>	Unwanted Fire Signals	The service should make sure it effectively addresses the burden of false alarms.	AM Service Delivery	65%	19/29 	31/09/2026 (Date revised since last report)	Activity has focused on reducing unwanted fire signals through policy change, monitoring and improved data use. A revised UwFS policy has been implemented following trial, supported by evaluation, EQIA and formal governance approval. Ongoing work is strengthening protection-led monitoring, establishing clear definitions for AFA/UwFS, and improving data accuracy and reporting. A longer-term departmental approach is being developed to embed consistent management, performance monitoring and continuous improvement in addressing false alarms.
<b>AFI 5</b>	Quality Assurance Protection Audits	The service should make sure it has an effective quality assurance process, so staff carry out audits to an appropriate standard.	AM Service Delivery	59%	13/22 	31/07/2025	Activity under AFI 05 has focused on strengthening protection quality assurance arrangements. Quality assurance activities have been clearly defined and embedded within audit activity. Work is ongoing to build capacity to lead QA, improve systems to ensure audit completion and follow-up, and establish consistent methods for sharing QA outcomes and learning. Further activity is planned to align departmental workforce planning and objectives with quality assurance requirements, supporting sustained and consistent audit standards across the service.

AFI Ref	Theme / Domain	AFI Description	Lead Officer	% Comp	Task Comp	Target Comp Date	Commentary
<b>Responding to fires and other emergencies</b>							
<b>AFI 6</b>	Operational Incident Learning	The service should make sure it has an effective system for learning from operational incidents.	AM Operations and Risk	65%	13/20 	30/06/2026	Activity under AFI 06 has focused on strengthening how the service captures, tracks and acts on learning from operational incidents. Core elements are complete, including gap analysis, structured action tracking, audit arrangements, and clear leadership accountability for debrief activity. Work is ongoing to embed consistent structured debrief approaches, strengthen evaluation frameworks and formalise operational learning oversight roles. These activities support improved assurance that learning is identified, monitored and acted upon consistently across incidents and functions.
<b>Responding to major and multi-agency incidents</b>							
<b>AFI 7</b>	Fire Survival Guidance	The service should make sure its method of sharing fire survival guidance information with multiple callers is understood by staff and is well tested.	AM Operations and Risk	53%	8/15 	28/11/2026	Activity is focused on strengthening fire survival guidance arrangements through improved training, testing and assurance. Work is underway to deliver mandatory Unblur and FSG training, develop scenario-based testing, and establish clear responsibility for FSG oversight. Structured tools and review processes are being introduced to support consistent Fire Control decision-making. Further work is planned to monitor incident outcomes and provide assurance that FSG arrangements are effective, understood and consistently applied.
<b>AFI 8</b>	Marauding Terrorist Attack	The service should make sure it is well prepared to form part of a multi-agency response to a terrorist incident, and its procedures for responding are understood by all staff and are well tested.	AM Operations and Risk	75%	6/8 	31/10/2026 Dates revised since last report	Activity under AFI 08 has focused on strengthening preparedness for marauding terrorist incidents through training, exercising and assurance. Core assurance cycles, feedback loops, learning capture and exercise coordination are complete. Ongoing work is embedding station-level assurance, improving command and communication arrangements, and formalising multi-agency coordination through further exercises and agreements. Planned activity will expand partner engagement and post-exercise evaluation to provide continued assurance that procedures are understood, tested and effective across the service.


**Efficiency** (How efficient is the service at keeping people safe and secure)




<b>Making best use of resources</b>	<b>Making the fire and rescue service affordable now and in the future</b>
<b>Inadequate</b>	<b>Requires Improvement</b>

AFI Ref	Theme / Domain	AFI Description	Lead Officer	% Comp	Task Comp	Target Comp Date	Commentary
<b>Making best use of resources</b>							
<b>AFI 9</b>	Reduce non pay costs	The service should make sure that it is taking steps to reduce non-pay costs and can show how it is achieving value for money.	Head of Finance	43%	7/16 	31/10/2026	Activity has focused on improving oversight of non-pay costs and demonstrating value for money. Regular scrutiny and review arrangements are established, supported by improved reporting to officers and members. Work is underway to strengthen procurement capability, capture learning from previous activity and introduce sector benchmarking. Further activity is planned to systematically identify and record efficiencies, supporting clearer assurance on cost control and value-for-money outcomes across non-pay expenditure.
<b>AFI 10</b>	Business Continuity	The service should make sure it has appropriate business continuity arrangements in place, regularly review the arrangements and test them to make sure they take account of all foreseeable threats and risks	AM Operations and Risk	97%	40/41 	12/06/2026	Activity is focused on strengthening business continuity across the service. Work is underway to develop a coherent BCM strategy, establish governance and ownership, align risks to CRMP and corporate registers, and embed standardised plans. Testing, exercising and learning arrangements are being formalised to improve assurance. Programme management activity is progressing to integrate lessons learned and improve oversight, with further work planned on ICT resilience, performance indicators and tracking to support sustainable continuity arrangements.

<b>AFI 11</b>	Evaluation of Collaboration	The service should make sure it effectively monitors, reviews and evaluates the benefits and outcomes of any collaboration activity.	AM Transformation and Collaboration	100 %	20/20 	01/05/2026	Activity has focused on establishing a structured approach to evaluating collaboration activity. A formal evaluation policy and refreshed partnerships policy are in progress, supported by a completed audit of existing collaborations and prioritisation into phased evaluation waves. Targeted training is being delivered to key stakeholders to support consistent application. Recently completed work has formalised evaluation processes and reporting arrangements, strengthening assurance over the benefits, outcomes and value of collaborative activity.
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**Making the FRS affordable now and in the future**




<b>AFI Ref</b>	<b>Theme / Domain</b>	<b>AFI Description</b>	<b>Lead Officer</b>	<b>% Comp</b>	<b>Task Comp</b>	<b>Target Comp Date</b>	<b>Commentary</b>
<b>AFI 12</b>	Governance and Selection of Projects	The service should have a clear internal structure with appropriate governance arrangements to make sure the selection, design and delivery of projects are well managed, represent value for money and provide the intended outcomes.	Deputy Chief Fire Officer	72%	8/11 	29/06//2026 Dates revised since last report	Activity has focused on strengthening internal governance and project oversight. A corporate governance framework, defined portfolio roles, revised service structure and improved meeting arrangements are established, supported by a portfolio management methodology and dedicated resourcing. Work is ongoing to enhance policy alignment, transparency of decision-making and assurance against Fire Standards. These activities are intended to ensure projects are consistently selected, governed and delivered in line with organisational priorities, value-for-money expectations and assurance requirements.




<b>AFI 13</b>	Workforce Productivity	The service needs to assure itself that it is making the most of opportunities to improve workforce productivity and develop future capacity through use of innovation, including the use of technology."	AM Service Delivery	39%	9/23 	30/11/2026 Dates revised since last report	Activity has focused initially on improving workforce productivity through better data and insight. A prototype data collection tool has been completed and trialed, with dashboard development requested to improve understanding of wholetime firefighter utilisation. Further planned work will address performance indicators, station work planning, duty systems, overtime reliance and the use of technology to support new ways of working, enabling more effective productivity management and future capacity planning across the service.
<b>AFI 14</b>	Skills to manage change	The service should make sure it has the right skills and capacity to successfully manage change across the organisation.	Deputy Chief Fire Officer	42%	3/7 	No due date set	Activity has focused on strengthening the service's ability to manage change. A clear case for change has been completed, informed by inspection and corporate evidence. Work is progressing to assess organisational readiness, develop senior leadership capability and establish an organisational development framework. Further planned activity will strengthen links to organisational assurance and learning, supporting consistent approaches to change management and building the capacity and skills required to deliver sustainable improvement across the service.
<b>AFI 15</b>	Estates management linked to CRMP	The service should make sure its estates management programmes are linked to its community risk management plan, and that it understands the impact future changes to those programmes may have on its service to the public	Head of Resources	50%	1/2 	31/05/2026	Activity focuses on aligning estates planning with the Community Risk Management Plan. Work is underway to link the Resources Strategy directly to the CRMP, ensuring future decisions on property and fleet assets support operational, welfare and cultural needs. Learning from recent estates and training centre developments is being used to inform future programmes. This activity is intended to improve understanding of how estates decisions impact service delivery and ensure future estates planning is risk-based and strategically aligned.




**People** (How well does the Service look after its people?)



Promoting the right values and culture	Getting the right people with the right skills	Ensuring fairness and promoting diversity	Managing performance and developing leaders
Requires Improvement	Requires Improvement	Requires Improvement	Requires Improvement



AFI Ref	Theme / Domain	AFI Description	Lead Officer	% Comp	Task Comp	Target Comp Date	Commentary
<b>Promoting the right values and culture</b>							
<b>AFI 16</b>	Staff demonstrates values	The service should make sure all staff understand and demonstrate its values.	Chief Fire Officer	85%	46/54 	30/06/2026 Dates revised since last report	Activity is focused on embedding organisational values and expected behaviours across the service. Core enablers, including performance management systems and alignment with external audit findings, are in place. Ongoing work is delivering a cultural action plan supported by training, refreshed policies, staff engagement, communications and survey feedback. Activity is intentionally continuous, with performance metrics and evaluation used to monitor behaviours, leadership impact and cultural alignment, ensuring values are consistently understood and demonstrated at all levels.
<b>AFI 17</b>	Senior staff values	The service should assure itself that senior managers are visible and demonstrate	Chief Fire Officer	95%	19/20 	30/06/2026	Activity has focused on assuring leadership visibility and consistent demonstration of values. A gap analysis against the Leading the Service Fire Standard is complete, and senior leadership development has been delivered. Ongoing work promotes visible and accessible leadership through coaching, mentoring, action learning sets and structured engagement with staff. Evaluation is embedded through surveys, feedback mechanisms and professional standards reporting, providing continued assurance that leadership behaviours are visible, values-led and subject to ongoing scrutiny.

AFI Ref	Theme / Domain	AFI Description	Lead Officer	% Comp	Task Comp	Target Comp Date	Commentary
AFI 18	Mental and physical health	The service should make sure staff have access to services to support both their mental and physical health.	Head of Human Resources and Administration	100%	27/27 	31/03/2026	Activity has focused on improving access to mental and physical health support for staff. A new Occupational Health service has been fully procured and implemented following completion of specification, tendering and contract award activity. Ongoing work is strengthening physical fitness support through SMT oversight and equipment review, alongside further investment in internal health, safety and wellbeing capacity. These activities are aimed at embedding sustainable, accessible wellbeing support across the service.
AFI 19	Monitor working hours	The service should proactively monitor working hours (including overtime) to improve staff well-being	Head of Human Resources and Administration	58%	14/24 	31/07/2026	Activity focuses on improving oversight of staff working hours to support wellbeing. Work is underway to clarify Working Time Directive requirements, update policies and trial revised processes, including On-Call arrangements. Systems for recording and monitoring working hours are being developed and tested, supported by business intelligence reporting. Implementation activity includes communications, training, quality assurance and evaluation, aimed at embedding consistent monitoring arrangements and providing assurance that working hours are actively managed across the service.
AFI 20	Managing Health and Safety	The service should assure itself that its arrangements for managing health and safety are effective	AM Operations and Risk	63%	14/22 	30/09/2026	Activity is focused on strengthening assurance over health and safety arrangements. Work is underway to review current practice against Fire Standards, improve risk assessment and accident investigation processes, and enhance health and safety training. Monitoring arrangements are being reinforced through new metrics, reporting tools, quarterly reviews and independent audit activity. Further work is progressing to evaluate the impact of changes and provide assurance that health and safety arrangements are effective, embedded and sustainable across the service.

AFI Ref	Theme / Domain	AFI Description	Lead Officer	% Comp	Task Comp	Target Comp Date	Commentary
<b>Getting the right people with the right skills</b>							
AFI 21	Workforce Planning	The service should make sure its workforce plan takes full account of the skills and capabilities it needs to implement its community risk management plan.	AM Operations and Risk	36%	12/25 	30/04/2026	Activity has focused on establishing the strategic foundations for effective workforce planning. A future workforce direction has been defined, informed by external drivers and risk. Work is progressing to develop workforce intelligence and governance arrangements to support assurance and decision-making. Further planned activity will identify workforce gaps, strengthen skills tracking and succession planning, and roll out departmental workforce plans, ensuring capacity and capability are aligned to the Community Risk Management Plan.
AFI 22	Succession Planning	The service should review its succession planning to make sure that it has effective arrangements in place to manage staff turnover while continuing to provide its core service to the public.	Head of Human Resources and Administration	95%	17/18 	31/12/2026	Activity has focused on strengthening succession planning and workforce resilience. A refreshed five-year retirement profile and completed job evaluation activity have improved visibility of future workforce risks, including technical and specialist roles. Ongoing work through HR and People Management Meetings is identifying single points of failure and feeding this intelligence into workforce planning. These activities support improved management of staff turnover and aim to ensure core service delivery is maintained as workforce changes occur.
AFI 23	Staff Training	The service should assure itself that all staff receive the right training for their role.	AM Operations and Risk	58%	10/17 	30/09/2026	Activity is focused on assuring that staff receive appropriate training for their roles. Planned work includes conducting a comprehensive training gap analysis, developing a training strategy aligned to the Community Risk Management Plan, strengthening governance and oversight arrangements, and introducing evaluation through audit and review.

AFI Ref	Theme / Domain	AFI Description	Lead Officer	% Comp	Task Comp	Target Comp Date	Commentary
<b>Ensuring fairness and promoting diversity</b>							
<b>AFI 24</b>	Anti Bullying and Harassment	The service should review how effective its policy on bullying, harassment, and discrimination is in reducing unacceptable behaviour towards its staff.	Head of Human Resources and Administration	81%	30/37 	31/07/2026	Activity has focused on strengthening how bullying, harassment and discrimination are prevented, reported and addressed. A refreshed Anti-Bullying and Harassment policy and Preventing Sexual Harassment actions are in place, supported by ongoing communication and manager training. Work continues to improve staff understanding through training and engagement, build confidence in confidential reporting, and embed expectations through effective performance management.
<b>AFI 25</b>	Diverse workforce	The service should identify and overcome barriers to equal opportunity, so its workforce better represents its community, including making sure staff understand the value of positive action and having a diverse workforce.	Head of Human Resources and Administration	93%	27/29 	30/06/2026	Activity has focused on improving equality of opportunity and strengthening positive action in recruitment. Evaluation of previous campaigns and demographic data has been completed, informing improvements to recruitment accessibility, data capture and use of EQIAs. Ongoing work is enhancing planning and reach of positive action activity, including targeted engagement and specialist recruitment channels, alongside continued attendance at recruitment events.
<b>AFI 26</b>	Equality Impact Assessments	The service should make sure it has robust processes in place to carry out equality impact assessments and review its policies and procedures to make sure those staff with a protected characteristic aren't disproportionately affected.	Head of Human Resources and Administration	88%	8/9 	29/05/2026	Activity has focused on strengthening grievance and disciplinary arrangements to ensure they are understood, accessible and effective. Updated policies are in place, with ongoing work to improve awareness through staff communications and targeted management training. Monitoring and assurance activity is being developed to review case outcomes, themes and consistency of application. These actions support fair, timely resolution of workplace issues and provide assurance that grievance and disciplinary processes are operating effectively across the service.

AFI Ref	Theme / Domain	AFI Description	Lead Officer	% Comp	Task Comp	Target Comp Date	Commentary
AFI 27	Collect Equality Data	The service should improve the way it collects equality data so it can better understand its workforce's demographics and needs.	Head of Human Resources and Administration	100%	10/10 	12/03/2026	Activity has focused on improving the collection and quality of workforce equality data. Actions to reduce incomplete or "not stated" data have been completed, supported by targeted staff communications, system fixes and stronger governance oversight. Equality data collection is now embedded within induction and IPDR processes, with regular reporting and benchmarking in place. These activities provide improved insight into workforce demographics and support more informed equality, diversity and inclusion decision-making across the service.  Evidence assurance programmed by T&C.
<b>Managing performance and developing leaders</b>							
AFI 28	Performance Development	The service should improve all-staff understanding and application of the performance development review process.	Head of Human Resources and Administration	100%	5/5 	31/05/2026 Dates revised since last report	Activity has focused on strengthening the performance development review process. Work is underway to review and simplify IPDR arrangements, improve staff understanding and increase manager capability to deliver meaningful reviews. Monitoring of completion and quality has been strengthened, with evaluation activity in progress to assess impact. These actions aim to improve consistency, value and effectiveness of performance and development conversations, supporting individual development and providing better assurance over workforce performance management.  Evidence assurance programmed by T&C.

AFI Ref	Theme / Domain	AFI Description	Lead Officer	% Comp	Task Comp	Target Comp Date	Commentary
<b>AFI 29</b>	Fair Promotions	The service should make sure its processes for the selection, development and promotion of staff are open and fair, and it should do more to make sure staff have confidence in promotion and selection processes.	Head of Human Resources and Administration	90%	20/22 	30/06/2026	Activity has focused on strengthening fairness and transparency within promotion and selection processes. Work is underway to review existing arrangements, improve communication with staff and deliver training to support consistent, unbiased decision-making. Monitoring and evaluation activity is ongoing to assess staff confidence and the effectiveness of changes. These actions aim to ensure selection, development and promotion processes are open, fair and consistently applied, providing assurance and improving trust in workforce progression arrangements.
<b>AFI 30</b>	High Potential Staff	The service should put in place an open and fair process to identify, develop and support high-potential staff and aspiring leaders.	Head of Human Resources and Administration	90%	28/31 	30/06/2026	Activity has focused on strengthening arrangements to identify and support high-potential staff and aspiring leaders. A gap analysis against the Leading the Service and Leading and Developing People Fire Standards has been completed, providing clarity on weaknesses in succession planning and leadership pathways. Ongoing activity is progressing the development of fair identification processes, structured development routes and assurance arrangements. These actions are intended to embed transparent, standards-aligned approaches to talent identification and leadership development across the service.

## **6. HMICFRS Workstreams and Progress Summary**

It is encouraging to evidence progress against all elements of the Cause of Concern following increased oversight, governance and scrutiny

Progress across the Cause of Concern and Areas for Improvement shows strong and sustained delivery, particularly in governance, financial reporting, prevention, and leadership. Strategic oversight has strengthened through improved frameworks, performance management processes, and increased use of risk and data systems. High completion rates in financial and risk reporting, alongside consistent use of the corporate risk register and progress in prevention and regulatory assurance, demonstrate improved organisational stability and assurance.

Key areas of focus centre on embedding consistency and long-term sustainability, particularly in workforce productivity, estates alignment, change capacity, and operational preparedness. While progress continues in performance frameworks, data capability, and quality assurance, further work is needed to fully embed these arrangements and evidence consistent impact. Continued emphasis on workforce planning, training, system integration, and clearer reporting will support sustained improvement and organisational effectiveness

Overall, the trajectory indicates momentum in several key areas, but the Service must maintain focus to translate progress into long-term improvement and compliance with HMICFRS expectations.

## **7. Financial Implications**

There are no financial implications arising from this report.

## **8. Legal Comment**

There are no legal implications arising from this report.

## **9. HMICFRS Areas For Improvement, Cause of Concern, External Audit Recommendations**

This report is directly related to the HMICFRS Area For Improvement, External Audit and Misconduct recommendations.

## **10. Communications**

Communication impacts arising from this report will be managed through the HMICFRS communications strategy

## **11. Environmental**

There are no environmental impacts arising from this report or relevant UN Sustainability Goals.

## **12. ICT**

The ICT impacts have been highlighted in the report and the Risk Management document regarding digital, data and ICT systems support. This is being managed through the Programme Board.

## **13 Appendix**

There are no appendices attached to this report.

## **14 Background Papers**

There are no background papers associated with this report.