MERSEYSIDE FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY			
MEETING OF THE:	**POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE**		
DATE:	**14 DECEMBER 2023**	**REPORT NO:**	**CFO/059/23**
PRESENTING OFFICER	**CHIEF FIRE OFFICER PHIL GARRIGAN**		
RESPONSIBLE OFFICER:	**DEB APPLETON**	**REPORT AUTHOR:**	**DEB APPLETON**
OFFICERS CONSULTED:	**STRATEGIC LEADERSHIP TEAM**		
TITLE OF REPORT:	**HMICFRS INSPECTION REPORT 2023**		

APPENDICES:	**APPENDIX A:**	**MFRS HMICFRS INSPECTION REPORT**

Purpose of Report

1. To inform Members of the outcomes of the 2023 inspection of Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service (MFRS) by His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS).

Recommendation

2. It is recommended that Members note the outcomes of the 2023 HMICFRS inspection which can be found as an appendix to this report.

Introduction and Background

3. In May and June 2023, HMICFRS carried out its third full inspection of MFRS. This was preceded by two months during which information and data was provided to the inspectorate to support them in the inspection process.

4. The inspection involved many areas of the Service and took the form of document reviews, interviews, desk top reviews, reality testing with staff and focus groups.

5. The structure of the inspection was largely similar to previous years, but each inspection has had a focus on different areas of the organisation. In each Service, the inspecting team will also focus on areas for improvement from the previous inspection. In 2023, the most significant difference was a change to the criteria used to judge the performance of the Service with a move from four judgements; Outstanding, Good, Requires Improvement and Inadequate, to the inclusion of a judgement of Adequate. In addition, there has been a change from issuing overall judgments for the three pillars of Effectiveness, Efficiency and People to a judgement being provided for each of the 13 areas being inspected, with no overall judgements.

6. In the final report, published in October 2023 (summarised below) the Service attained the three Outstanding judgements. None of the 13 themes were classed as Requires Improvement or Inadequate (members will recall we previously had one requires improvement in 2021):

Our judgments

Our inspection assessed how well Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service has performed in 11 areas. We have made the following graded judgments:

Outstanding	Good	Adequate	Requires improvement	Inadequate
Preventing fire and risk	Understanding fire and risk	Promoting values and culture		
Responding to major incidents	Public safety through fire regulation	Right people, right skills		
Best use of resources	Responding to fires and emergencies	Promoting fairness and diversity		
	Future affordability			
	Managing performance and developing leaders			

7. As with every inspection, the inspection team did identify some areas in which the Service could improve. Those were:

- The service should assure itself that its use of enforcement powers prioritises the highest risks and includes proportionate activity to reduce risk.
- The service should make sure all staff understand and demonstrate its values.
- The service should assure itself that middle managers demonstrate service values through their behaviours
- The service should assure itself that it has an effective succession planning mechanism in place for all roles
- The service should review how effective its policy on bullying, harassment and discrimination is in reducing unacceptable behaviour towards its staff.

The inspection also identified promising practice:

“The service makes excellent use of the people and resources available:
The service has four different duty systems (work patterns) for firefighters, which are aligned with emergency response demand (in 2022, 65.5 percent of all incidents occurred during the day) and contribute to improving productivity and efficiency.”
And innovative practice:

“The service has introduced a development day for women”

8. The Service takes seriously any suggestions for improvement and will of course put in place an action plan to address areas for improvement and report back to Members on progress, as has been the case with the two previous inspections. Equally, the Service is pleased with the positive and innovative practice identified, which reflects a Service-wide focus on continuous improvement.

9. Based on these outcomes MFRS is currently the highest performing Service in England and the overall impression of the report is that MFRS is performing strongly, as referenced in the HMI's comments below:

   "I congratulate Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service on its performance in keeping people safe and secure from fire and other risks. We were pleased to see that the service has made progress since our last inspection in May 2021. For example, the service has improved how it commands fire service assets assertively and safely at incidents, how it promotes equality, diversity and inclusion and how it works with underrepresented groups in the workforce."

10. The performance is testimony to the hard work and tenacity of the whole Service and it reflects the commitments we have made within our Leadership Message – Here to Serve – Here to Protect – Here to Keep you Safe.

Equality and Diversity Implications

11. No EIA is required for this report, but EIAs will be produced for actions resulting from the inspection report as appropriate. The report noted improvements since the last inspection in how MFRS promotes ED&I.

Staff Implications

12. Many staff were involved in the inspection process and the inspection team and Chief Fire Officer thanked those staff for their positive engagement with the process.

Legal Implications

13. Any legal implications will be addressed as part of the action planning process.

Financial Implications & Value for Money

14. Any financial implications will be addressed as part of the action planning process.

Risk Management, Health & Safety, and Environmental Implications

15. Any risk management, health and safety or environmental implications will be addressed as part of the action planning process.

Contribution to Our Vision:	***To be the best Fire & Rescue Service in the UK.***
Our Purpose:	*Here to serve, Here to protect, Here to keep you safe.*

16. The inspection report provides significant assurances regarding the Service's performance against its purpose.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

CFO/111/11 If this report follows on from another, list the previous report(s)

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

MFRA **M**erseyside **F**ire and **R**escue **A**uthority

MFRS **M**erseyside **F**ire and **R**escue **S**ervice