

## NORTH YORKSHIRE FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE



### Independent Audit Committee (IAC) Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> December 2025 **DRAFT** Summary Minutes

**Meeting:** Independent Audit Committee  
**Date and Time:** Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> December 2025, 10:00 – 12:00hrs  
**Location:** Haigh Conference Room, Alverton Court Police HQ and via Teams  
**Chair:** Roman Pronyszyn

#### Attendees:

Name	Role
Roman Pronyszyn (RP)	Committee Member & Chair
Heather Cook (HC)	Committee Member
Damien Henderson (DH)	NYFRS Area Manager - Director for Service Improvement and Assurance
Charlie French (CF)	NYFRS Director of Service Design and Delivery
Lee Chapman (LC)	NYFRS & NYP Deputy Director for Support Services and Transformation
Michael Porter (MP)	YNYCA OPFCC Assistant Director of Resources (Deputy s73 Officer)
Paul Clark (PC)	YNYCA Governance & Assurance Manager
Matt Stacey (MS)	RSM UK Risk Assurance Services – Managing Consultant
Ian McClelland (IM)	Governance Support Officer

#### Apologies:

Name	Role
Dr Stuart Green (SG)	Committee Member & Vice Chair
Lisa Stitt (LS)	Assistant Chief Officer

#### Items and Decisions:

No.	Discussion	Outcome / Decision
1.	<b>Attendance and Apologies.</b> Attendance and apologies are noted above.  With only two Members in attendance, the quorate threshold was not met to approve any necessary decisions.	<b>Refer to Item 13</b>
2.	<b>Declaration of Interest.</b> There were no declarations of interest.	
3.	<b>Minutes and Actions of Previous Meeting.</b> The Minutes of the meeting held on 23.09.25 were reviewed. There were no comments or amendments and the Minutes were recorded as accurate and were proposed for approval by RP, seconded by HC.	<b>Approved</b>
4.	<b>Matters Arising.</b> There were no outstanding matter arising from the previous Minutes.	
5.	<b>Finance, Auditing and Accounts.</b> MP noted that no accounts will be provided to IAC Meetings going forward as financial governance is reported via the Combined Authority.	

No.	Discussion	Outcome / Decision
6.	<p data-bbox="225 174 1066 203"><b>Internal Audit.</b> MS proved an update on all internal audit documents.</p> <p data-bbox="225 248 1262 741">6.1. <b>Progress Report.</b> Progress of the FY25/26 Internal Audit Plan highlighted that three audit reports were in progress. There had been delays with the Audit Plan which was attributed to the Langdale Moor major incident through the summer and also RSM staff sickness. The audits are now undergoing QA review and are fully expected to be ready prior to the next meeting. Progress was noted being generally positive. Chair noted that the number of audits due for presenting at the next meeting in Mar 26 will leave very little time for any necessary corrective actions and therefore urged that realistic and achievable deadlines are set against any noted audit actions. MS provided assurance that indicative feedback on key areas requiring work have been shared with NYFRS and work towards any actions or emerging issues raised have already commenced. MP noted that while recent audit outcomes were positive, the overall annual opinion has been affected by outstanding actions from previous years. The importance of addressing and closing these actions was reiterated as key to future improvement. Committee Members present noted the report.</p> <p data-bbox="225 786 1262 1167">6.2. <b>Operational Training – Final Report.</b> The audit had covered strategy, policies, training and development plans, assessment, verification, retraining opportunities and governance reporting which resulted in an overall positive audit which had been awarded a <i>reasonable assurance</i> opinion with one medium priority action. DH highlighted that just two years ago HMICFRS had placed NYFRS operational training as a <i>Cause For Concern</i>; this positive internal audit result was a testament to significant hard work and NYFRS proactively utilising the internal audit process. Two successful full rounds of recruit training and five on-call recruit courses have been completed, demonstrating the training school's high activity. Chair noted his congratulations to the Operational Training Team and senior leadership for this impressive turnaround. Committee Members present approved the report.</p> <p data-bbox="225 1211 1262 1738">6.3. <b>Emergency Services Benchmarking - NYFRS.</b> The benchmarking report compared the NYFRS's audit outcomes to sector averages, showing that through FY24/25 NYFRS was much closer to national levels with a reduction in high-priority actions and having received no partial or minimal assurance opinions. Sector-wide, cyber, digital and data risks were identified as the most significant, with HR and finance risks also highlighted. This was the first time this benchmarking report had been provided; Members present noted that it was presented in a clear and informative format. Both MP and Chair urged caution when reviewing and interpreting the benchmarking data, emphasising that internal audit should focus on areas of risk rather than aiming to match, or exceed, sector averages. NYFRS's approach must remain to target audits where value can be added, rather than seeking to improve image through less challenging audits. MP did note that the report shows the positive journey that NYFRS have been on. DH informed the committee that a joint thematic inspection with NYP on cyber security has been scheduled for Jan 26. This will be reported on at the scheduled Mar 26 meeting. Committee Members present noted the report.</p> <p data-bbox="225 1783 1262 2063">6.4. <b>Emergency Services News Briefing, RSM Emerging Risk Radar &amp; Failure to Prevent Fraud Briefing.</b> MS noted that these three separate documents were provided for information only. The documents are hopefully useful to understand sector trends, risks and prevention measures including references to International Fraud Awareness Week and available resources for further learning. CF provided assurance that the documents would feature on the NYFRS Risk &amp; Assurance Board agenda to focus on ensuring all relevant risks are captured in the Risk Register. Committee Members present noted the briefing reports.</p>	<p data-bbox="1326 707 1406 736">Noted</p> <p data-bbox="1302 1133 1430 1162">Approved</p> <p data-bbox="1326 1704 1406 1733">Noted</p> <p data-bbox="1326 2024 1406 2054">Noted</p>

No.	Discussion	Outcome / Decision
7.	<p><b>Performance Indicators.</b> DH provided an update on the Q3 data covering the Jul – Sept period. The performance had been impacted by the major moorland fire incident. Despite this, targeted prevention of home-fire safety visits had been able to continue. Noted that the Response Standard of 11 minutes was met for all incidents, less dwelling fires. A deeper dive into dwelling fire responses was conducted which revealed that there were a thankfully low number of dwelling fires (less than 50 in Q3) and there had been no serious injuries or fatalities. Through Jul the Response Standard had been achieved, Aug and Sept had not been achieved due to the number of engines committed to the moorland fire. Although outside of the reporting period, DH provided assurance that response times in Oct and Nov has fallen back into the under 11 minutes standard.</p> <p>Chair challenged that moorland fires are becoming more commonplace, asking what strategic planning is taking place within NYFRS to prepare. DH acknowledged the increase in moorland fires; what were once a 1-100 year event is now as frequent as being a 1-10 year event. DH provided assurance that the Community Risk Management Plan is to be launching w/c 08.12.25 with climate changes a key part of that Plan which will address both fires and flooding and how the increase in demand will be met. The Plan outlines strategies for working with communities and adopting new technologies to meet increasing demand. Of note, DH conformed that all local premises had been protected during the summer’s moorland fire.</p> <p>MP noted that an additional £2.6 million of costs were incurred due to the major incident, representing about 5% of the annual budget, and noted that a claim for reimbursement had been submitted to the government. MP highlighted the challenges posed by the Funding Review, which is expected to provide funding based on ‘demand’, rather than ‘risk’ which will reduce funding not only for the national fire sector, but also from the local authority, making it increasingly difficult to absorb the costs of frequent major incidents. Committee Members present approved the report.</p>	Approved
8.	<p><b>HMICFRS Inspection Update Report.</b> DH provided an update to the committee on progress against HMICFRS recommendations, including the closure of one red risk regarding the misconduct handling thematic. Regular meetings continue to be held to address barriers to closing other outstanding actions. DH added that NYFRS was commended within the <i>Chief HMI's State of Fire and Rescue Report</i> for closing all 24 previous Areas for Improvement.</p> <p>Chair acknowledged the very positive report and the national recognition. However, the importance of closing overdue actions, some of which were 8-9 months late, was emphasised. Chair directed that a deep dive be conducted to distinguish between actions that could be gripped and completed and those not applicable due to organisational constraints, and how those risks are being managed. A one-page progress update is to be provided at the next meeting. Committee Members present approved the report.</p>	<p>Action #39 (DH)</p> <p>Approved</p>
9.	<p><b>Health &amp; Safety Report.</b> DH provided the update which noted that a similar number of incidents had been reported to previous periods. Of significance, four individuals had been involved in a vehicle incident during the summer moorland major fire, with no long-term injuries. A new Vehicle Accident and Collision Group has been established to review incidents, identify trends, and recommend further mitigations.</p> <p>A review is underway to incidents that occur whilst training in a gym. Whilst most musculoskeletal injuries to firefighters were found to occur outside shifts, NYFRS is now working with an Exercise Physiologist to ensure safe use of gym equipment to reduce long and short-term sickness.</p>	

No.	Discussion	Outcome / Decision
	A new e-Learning Coordinator has been recruited to review and streamline mandatory training modules, aiming to improve accessibility and relevance for both on-call and whole-time staff, particularly given the organisation's large geographic area. Committee Members present approved the report.	<b>Approved</b>
10.	<b>AOB.</b> No further matters were raised for discussion.	
11.	<b>Next Meeting.</b> Thursday 19 <sup>th</sup> March 2026 at 15:00. Hybrid attendance.	
12.	<b>Proposed Dates of 2026 Meetings:</b> Thursday 25 <sup>th</sup> June 2026 at 15:00. Thursday 24 <sup>th</sup> September 2026 at 15:00. Thursday 17 <sup>th</sup> December 2026 at 15:00.	
13.	<i><b>Post Meeting Addendum.</b> The DRAFT Minutes were presented to Committee Member SG for review. SG had been sighted on all meeting papers.</i>  <i>SG had no further questions or comments and supported all outcomes, decisions and actions made during the meeting.</i>	<b>All Noted and Accepted agenda items were supported.</b>

**Actions Agreed:**

No.	Action / Update	Owner	Date Issued	Due Date	Date Closed
39	<b>HMICFRS Inspection Update Report.</b> There are HMICFRS actions that are overdue, some by 8 - 9 months. Chair directed that a deep dive be conducted to distinguish between actions that can be gripped and completed and those not applicable due to organisational constraints, and how those risks are being managed. A one-page progress update is to be provided at the next meeting.	DH	04.12.25	19.03.26	