



Cumbria Commissioner Fire & Rescue Authority

Annual Governance Statement – Good Governance Principles 2024-25

## Introduction and Scope of Responsibilities

The Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner for Cumbria (the Commissioner) in his capacity as Cumbria Commissioner Fire & Rescue Authority is responsible for ensuring business is carried out in accordance with the law and proper standards, that public money is safeguarded and properly accounted for, and used economically, efficiently and effectively.

To meet this overall responsibility, the Commissioner has put in place proper arrangements for overseeing what we do. These arrangements are intended to make sure that we do the right things, in the right way and are fair, open, honest and accountable.

Our arrangements for governance are set out within a Code of Corporate Governance ('The Code'). The Code explains the way the Commissioner governs and the frameworks that are in place to support the overall arrangements for fulfilling his functions. The Code of Corporate Governance is published alongside the Annual Governance Statement on the Commissioner's website at [www.cumbria-pcc.gov.uk](http://www.cumbria-pcc.gov.uk)

This Annual Governance Statement (AGS) describes how the Commissioner has followed The Code. It also meets the requirements of regulation 6(1) and 10(1) of the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015. The regulations say that we must prepare and publish an Annual Governance Statement (AGS) to accompany the Commissioner's statement of accounts.

### REVIEW OF EFFECTIVENESS

The key systems and processes that comprise the Commissioner's governance arrangements for 2024/25 have been guided by the seven core principles of Corporate Governance from the CIPFA/Solace Governance Framework applicable to the 2024/25 financial year. This is the standard against which all local government bodies, including fire, should assess themselves.

The Commissioner has responsibility for conducting, at least annually, a review of the effectiveness of his governance framework including the system of internal control. The review of effectiveness is informed by the work of Chief Officers and senior managers who have responsibility for the development and maintenance of the governance environment. The review process comprises:

- A cyclical detailed review of the key documents within the Commissioner's governance framework.
- A review of the governance arrangements in place to support each core principle, culminating in an updated Code of Corporate governance.
- A review of what has happened during the past year to evidence how the governance framework has been complied with.
- A review of the effectiveness of the arrangements for Internal Audit. The review is supported by consideration of the opinion of the Head of Internal Audit, as set out in his annual report.

- A review of the effectiveness of the Joint Audit Committee against CIPFA guidance on Audit Committees for Fire.

The following Annual Governance Statement demonstrates how the Commissioner has complied with the governance framework set out within The Code to meet each of the seven governance principles. The Annual Governance Statement is published alongside the Statement of Accounts and also incorporates an action plan of planned future improvements for governance arrangements.

The RAG ratings in the table below show where we were with the requirements for 2024/25.

## Core Principle A: Behaving with integrity, demonstrating strong commitment to ethical values and respecting the rule of law

Details	How We Meet these Principles	Evidence	Improvements/Updates	RAG
<b>A1: Behaving with Integrity and demonstrating strong commitment to ethical values.</b>				
We ensure that members and officers behave with integrity and lead a culture where acting in the public interest is visibly and consistently demonstrated thereby protecting the reputation of the organisation		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Members of the Community Scrutiny Panel and the Joint Audit Committee all sign a Code of Conduct as part of their appointment and induction process</li> <li>The Fire and Rescue Service locally and nationally through the National Fire Chiefs' Council has adopted the Core Code of Ethics which consists of five ethical principles. The principles underpin our commitment to serving the communities of Cumbria</li> <li>The Fire &amp; Rescue Service regularly communicates the core code of ethics to all staff and expected behaviours.</li> </ul>		
We take the lead in establishing specific standard operating principles or values for the organisation and its staff and that they are communicated and understood. These should build on the Seven Principles of Public Life (the Nolan Principles)		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Fire &amp; Rescue Authority is compliant with the CIPFA Statement on the role of the Chief Financial Officer in Local Government. The Chief Finance Officer performs the duties of the S151 Officer, and it is their role to ensure the proper administration of the Authority's financial affairs</li> <li>The Chief Finance Officer is a qualified accountant and is supported by a Finance Team that includes a number of professionally qualified finance officers</li> </ul>	The Service Leadership Team has recently agreed a set of core values that all members should display	
We lead by example and use standard operating principles or values as a framework for decision making and other actions.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>CCFRA and CFRS have a robust decision-making process embedded within its Corporate Governance Framework. This framework includes the delegations made to each key officer.</li> </ul>		

Details	How We Meet these Principles	Evidence	Improvements/Updates	RAG
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ In accordance with the CIPFA guidance, the Chief Finance Officer is a key member of the Fire &amp; Rescue Service Leadership Team, helping to develop and implement strategy and to resource and deliver the Authority's strategic objectives sustainably and in the public interest. They are also actively involved in all material business decisions to ensure immediate and longer-term implications, opportunities and risks are fully considered, and aligned with the Fire &amp; Rescue Authority's financial strategy.</li> <li>▪ The Chief Finance Officer leads on the promotion and delivery of good financial management so that public money is safeguarded at all times and used appropriately, economically, efficiently, and effectively.</li> <li>▪ The Chief Executive of the OPFCC is the Monitoring Officer for the Fire &amp; Rescue Authority as set out in section 5 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989, whose role is to advise on the rule of law and ensure decision-making is legally sound.</li> <li>▪ The Chief Fire Officer is the Head of Paid Service for the Fire &amp; Rescue Authority and is responsible for the coordination and discharge of the functions of the Fire &amp; Rescue Service .</li> <li>▪ The Community Scrutiny panel carry out the role of a 'standards committee' across the Fire &amp; Rescue Service and act as a critical friend, providing advice and guidance to help the Fire &amp; Rescue Authority and Fire &amp; Rescue Service to maintain high standards of integrity and ethical working.</li> </ul>		

Details	How We Meet these Principles	Evidence	Improvements/Updates	RAG
We demonstrate how we communicate and embed the standard operating principles or values through appropriate policies and processes which are reviewed on a regular basis to ensure that they are operating effectively		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The Fire &amp; Rescue Service has introduced a new Workforce Complaints procedure, making it easier for staff to raise issues and have access to welfare officers who can support them. The Service has also updated its Whistleblowing Policy. CCFRA reports on the effectiveness of these arrangements on an annual basis to the Joint Audit Committee.</li> <li>▪ The Service has an Anti-Money Laundering Policy and Guidance document, also Anti-Fraud and Corruption arrangements, which includes mechanisms for confidential reporting and whistleblowing. These arrangements are reported to the Joint Audit Committee on a bi-annual basis. CFRS website has information on how members of the public can make complaints regarding different staff, officers, members and volunteers.</li> <li>▪ In Autumn 2023, HMICFRS undertook a thematic inspection of the handling of misconduct in fire and rescue services. The inspection was undertaken across a number of Fire &amp; Rescue Services and a generic report was published on 1<sup>st</sup> August 2024. The report details 15 recommendations for services to adopt. Cumbria Fire &amp; Rescue Service has carried out an initial gap analysis of their processes and approach against the recommendations. This is being monitored through an internal governance board chaired by the Police, Fire &amp; Crime Commissioner. 13 of the 15 recommendations have been completed</li> </ul>	<p>All strategic documents have recently been reviewed, with a consistent approach that allows the Service to demonstrate how it is incorporating its value.</p> <p>A further piece of work will involve the Service considering the language used in its range of strategic documents to ensure it is appropriate and consistent.</p>	

Details	How We Meet these Principles	Evidence	Improvements/Updates	RAG
A2: Demonstrating strong commitment to ethical values				
Seeking to establish, monitor and maintain the organisation’s ethical standards and performance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ The Community Scrutiny Panel provides advice and guidance to help CCFRA and the Fire &amp; Rescue Service to maintain high standards of integrity and ethical working. During 2024/25 the Panel have carried out dip sample processes and thematic inspections across different areas of business within fire</li><li>▪ The Community Scrutiny Panel continues to monitor and reports on some specific areas of activity, such as complaint handling and misconduct cases, in relation to ethical issues.</li></ul>			
Underpinning personal behaviour with ethical values and ensuring they permeate all aspects of the organisation’s culture and operation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ The Fire &amp; Rescue Service has invested in Leadership Training across all levels of management in the Service, which specifically included the core code of ethics. Visits have been undertaken with all staff, both operational and corporate, providing an opportunity to make sure values and behaviours are understood and demonstrated by all staff.</li><li>▪ The Service also regularly references the core code of ethics and expected behaviours to all staff in its regular communications and strategic documents..</li><li>▪ The Service has developed and issued a 'how to complain' poster to all stations, advertising a Crimestoppers anonymous line available to raise complaints. This reporting line has been introduced to give staff the confidence to report issues if there are other reasons making them feel reluctant to do so.</li></ul>			

Details	How We Meet these Principles	Evidence	Improvements/Updates	RAG
Developing and maintaining robust policies and procedures which place emphasis on agreed ethical values		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ When the Service was part of Cumbria County Council, it did not have fire specific policies and procedures meaning a number of opportunities were missed to ensure that staff were working within a policy framework specifically focussed on fire. The change in Governance has meant during the last year, the Service has undertaken an extensive review of its policies and procedures ensuring they are fit for purpose and place emphasis on the core code of conduct and ethical values important to the Service.</li> <li>• Our key strategic documents have been reviewed by HMICFRS as part of their latest service inspection</li> <li>▪ The Fire &amp; Rescue Authority has a sustainable Procurement and Commissioning Strategy which provides a framework that ensures the Service obtains optimum value for money in all of its procurement and commissioning activity that supports the principles and priorities of sustainable development.</li> </ul>	A shared procurement function with the Constabulary ensures that ethical values are considered in any activity.	
Ensuring that external providers of services on behalf of the organisation are required to act with integrity and in compliance with high ethical standards expected by the organisation		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The new Procurement Act 2023 has gone live and the Fire &amp; Rescue Authority has reviewed its policies and procedures to align with the requirements of the Act.</li> <li>▪ a shared Procurement function has been established with Cumbria Constabulary that will enable joint contractual arrangements between Policing and Fire to improve efficiencies. This will ensure that all contractors are appropriately vetted to the standard required by Policing.</li> </ul>		



Details	How We Meet these Principles	Evidence	Improvements/Updates	RAG
A3	Respecting the rule of law			
We ensure staff demonstrate a strong commitment to the rule of the law as well as adhering to relevant laws and regulations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>The Fire &amp; Rescue Service has a Service Level Agreement with one of the unitary councils to deliver legal support to the Fire Authority and Fire &amp; Rescue Service on all legal matters.</li><li>The Chief Executive of the OPFCC is the Monitoring Officer for the Fire &amp; Rescue Authority and has specific legal requirements in legislation for ensuring legality for investigating any suspected instances of failure to comply with these requirements and for reporting any such instances to the PFCC, JAC or the Police, Fire &amp; Crime Panel.</li></ul>	The OPFCC is currently in the process of trying to recruit a new head of legal.		
We create conditions to ensure that statutory officers, other key post holders and members are able to fulfil their responsibilities in accordance with legislative and regulatory requirements.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>The Fire &amp; Rescue Authority has a Corporate Governance Framework and Decision-Making processes. These both provide guidance on expected behaviours to ensure integrity, transparency and excellent standards of ethical behaviours in accordance with legislative and regulatory requirements. The Joint Audit Committee. Is responsible for reviewing these on an annual basis.</li><li>Compliance with the CIPFA Statement on the Role of the Chief Financial Officer in Local Government is reported through the annual governance statement which accompanies the annual statement of accounts.</li></ul>			
We strive to optimise the use of the full powers available for the benefit of citizens, communities and other stakeholder	<p>Legal advice is provided to the Fire &amp; Rescue Authority and the Fire &amp; Rescue Service by the unitary council's Legal Services Department. If necessary, legal advice can be sought from other legal bodies.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>The Protection team has access to dedicated legal advice to allow it to carry out its statutory responsibilities.</li></ul>			

Details	How We Meet these Principles	Evidence	Improvements/Updates	RAG
We deal with breaches of legal and regulatory provisions effectively.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The Fire &amp; Rescue Service investigates all instances of Fraud, Corruption and Whistleblowing and the Chief Finance Officer, the PFCC and the Monitoring Officer have specific responsibilities for ensuring both organisations comply effectively with legal and regulatory provisions.</li> <li>▪ Policies are in place for Anti-Fraud &amp; Corruption, and Anti-Money Laundering.</li> <li>▪ Mechanisms exist to ensure that the Fire &amp; Rescue Service is compliant with Health and Safety Legislation. The Service has systems in place to support the reporting and investigation of all accidents and near misses. This helps in limiting potential for recurrence, increases learning from incidents and creates a safer environment with a positive Health and Safety culture.</li> </ul>		
We ensure corruption and misuse of power are dealt with effectively.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Anti-Fraud &amp; Corruption arrangements were last reviewed in 2024/2025 and presented to the Joint Audit Committee who concluded that the arrangements were effective.</li> <li>▪ The Fire &amp; Rescue Authority provides annual reports to the Committee on the effectiveness of the arrangements.</li> </ul>		

## Core Principle B: Ensuring openness and comprehensive stakeholder engagement

Details	How We Meet these Principles	Evidence	Improvements/Updates	RAG
B1	Openness			
We ensure there is an open culture through demonstrating, documenting and communicating the organisation's commitment to openness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>An Annual Statement of Assurance is prepared, agreed and published.</li><li>The Service has an established process for receiving and responding to Freedom of Information Requests, Environmental Information Requests and Subject Access Requests in line with specified timescales.</li><li>The OPFCC and Fire &amp; Rescue Service websites are used to publish a wide range of policy and information about the Service, making this easily accessible to the public.</li><li>The PFCC chairs a Public Accountability Conference every quarter whereby they hold the Chief Fire Officer and their Principal Officer Team to account. These meetings are open to the public. All agendas and presentations are available on the OPFCC website. The minutes of the meeting are also published to transparently demonstrate the PFCC holding the Chief Fire Officer to account in line with the PFCC's statutory role.</li></ul>	<p>Introduce the facility for members of the public to submit questions for consideration at all PACs.</p> <p>Updates on Information Governance to be provided regularly to Fire Executive Board</p>		

Details	How We Meet these Principles	Evidence	Improvements/Updates	RAG
We make decisions that are open about actions, plans, resource use, forecasts, outputs and outcomes.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The Fire &amp; Rescue Authority and Fire &amp; Rescue Service has a robust decision-making policy. Decisions made by the PFCC are published on the OPFCC website.</li> <li>▪ To promote openness and transparency, all Public Accountability Conferences are open to members of the press and public to attend, with all minutes arising from them being published subsequently</li> </ul>		
We provide clear reasoning and evidence for decisions in both public records and explanations to stakeholders.		<p>A decision template has been developed for the Fire &amp; Rescue Authority and the Fire &amp; Rescue Service to use. There is a requirement to include all information, rationales, risks and legal issues and the scheme of delegation highlights the required sign-off</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Minutes from meetings illustrate discussions and rationales for decisions made</li> <li>▪ There are agreed timescales for the publication of information (including minutes and decisions)</li> </ul>	Decision template to be revised to allow a consistent approach across all meetings.	

Details	How We Meet these Principles	Evidence	Improvements/Updates	RAG
We use formal and informal consultation and engagement to determine the most appropriate and effective interventions or courses of action.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The Fire &amp; Rescue Service has a Communication and Engagement Strategy</li> <li>▪ During 2024, the Fire &amp; Rescue Authority and Fire &amp; Rescue Service consulted with the public on the priorities in the Fire &amp; Rescue Plan and Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP). Consultation included both staff and public. The results of the consultation were reported to the Police, Fire &amp; Crime Panel to aid their decision when approving the Plan</li> <li>▪ Where required, we consult on any new proposals as a result of action within the CRMP. Mechanisms also exist for risk to be raised with the Service through a number of channels.</li> <li>▪ The PFCC also undertook public consultation to inform the setting of the Fire &amp; Rescue Service percept for 2024/2025</li> <li>▪ The Fire &amp; Rescue Service engages with various groups, organisations, and people throughout the year, organises community engagement events providing updates on the work of the Service. This also enables the public to ask the Service questions and provide feedback.</li> </ul>		

Details	How We Meet these Principles	Evidence	Improvements/Updates	RAG
<b>B2</b>	<b>Engaging comprehensively with institutional stakeholders</b>			
Effectively engage with stakeholders to develop formal and informal partnerships to allow recourses to be used efficiently		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The Commissioner in his capacity as the Fire Authority is actively engaged with a wide range of bodies to encourage a multi-agency approach to matters within his remit. For example, he chairs Safer Cumbria (a strategic board) that has responsibility for delivery of the Serious Violence Duty.</li> </ul>	CFRS participates effectively in a wide range of partnerships, including Water Safety, Road Safety, Safeguarding and Community Safety	
We develop formal and informal partnerships to allow for resources to be used efficiently and outcomes achieved more effectively.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Working in partnership with others is one of the key parts of the Authority's ethos. For example, the Commissioner chairs a Blue Light Collaboration board which has brought together the police and fire estates function into a single shared service.</li> <li>• There are formal arrangements in place with both local authorities to ensure high risk individuals receive a home fire safety visit</li> <li>• The Fire &amp; Rescue Service works closely with a wide range of partners; local authorities, NHS, policing, third sector organisations, etc. to deliver interventions on a number of areas such as Water Safety, Road Traffic Collisions (RTCS), Safeguarding and Modern Slavery.</li> <li>• Over the last twelve months, the Fire &amp; Rescue Service has worked with Cumbria Constabulary through the Cumbria Road Safety Partnership to ensure activity is targeted effectively and efficiently.</li> <li>• Cumbria Constabulary has introduced 'Right Care, Right Person' where a large number of incidents that they previously dealt with, are now picked up by a range of partner agencies, including the Fire &amp; Rescue Service. The Service has worked with the Constabulary to ensure they are not overwhelmed by any increased demand.</li> </ul>		

Details	How We Meet these Principles	Evidence	Improvements/Updates	RAG
	We ensure that partnerships are based on trust, shared commitment to change, a culture that promotes and accepts challenge and the added value of partnership working is explicit.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Partnerships we engage with are regularly reviewed. Our core code of ethics ensures that we engage with partnerships in good faith, ready to work with partners to deliver for the people of Cumbria.</li> </ul>		
<b>B3</b>	<b>Engaging stakeholders effectively including citizens and service users</b>			
	We are clear on the types of issues we will consult with or involve stakeholders or service users to ensure service provision is contributing towards the achievement of intended outcomes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The PFCC leads the Safer Cumbria partnership which provides strategic input into key strategies and plans that support the joint delivery of priority outcomes critical to Cumbria.</li> <li>During 2024/2025 engagement included visits to several Fire Stations and attendance at On-Call Appreciation events.</li> <li>The Fire &amp; Rescue Authority launched public consultation on the proposal to increase the fire part of the council tax precept for 2025/2026 The Fire &amp; Rescue Authority logs all quality-of-service issues that are raised with the Commissioner, these are tracked and escalated with the Chief Fire Officer where appropriate.</li> </ul>	Development of an Operational Cover Review will necessitate a comprehensive round of consultation with all interested parties on any changes to service delivery.	
	We ensure that communication methods are effective and that we are clear about our roles with regard to community engagement.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Fire &amp; Rescue Service has a Communication and Engagement Strategy. The Service regularly works with the PFCCs Office to ensure its engagement is fit for purpose.</li> <li>For large engagement such as the CRMP, the Service regularly reviews who and how it will consult with the public and partners.</li> </ul>		

Details	How We Meet these Principles	Evidence	Improvements/Updates	RAG
We collect and evaluate the views and experiences of communities, service users and organisations		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Fire &amp; Rescue Authority logs all quality-of-service issues that are raised, these are tracked and escalated with the Chief Fire Officer where appropriate. Quality of Service Issues raised with the Chief Fire Officer are addressed within Service.</li> </ul> <p>The CRMP reflects the Service's risk profile. This process enables the Service to be clear about the levels of risk that exist, influencing prevention, protection and response arrangements. In 2024, CFRS went through a comprehensive process to develop a CRMP to covers the years 2025-2028. This process involved the creation of a comprehensive Risk Based Evidence Profile using the latest available data and a comprehensive engagement programme.</p>		
We implement effective feedback mechanisms to demonstrate how views have been taken into account, whilst balancing competing demands.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All complaints and compliments are considered by the Service.</li> <li>All correspondence sent to the Fire &amp; Rescue Authority receives an individual and tailored response.</li> <li>Regular feedback is provided to staff and the Rep bodies in the course of Service delivery.</li> </ul>		
We take into account the interests of future generations of taxpayers and service users.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A 5-year Medium Term Financial Forecast is produced along with a longer-term Capital investment strategy to account for and consider future events that would impact on taxpayers and service users.</li> <li>Budget consultation is undertaken annually.</li> <li>The Fire &amp; Rescue Authority holds the Chief Fire Officer to account through its internal governance boards and Public Accountability Conferences to ensure value for money from service provision.</li> </ul>		



**Core Principle C: Defining outcomes in terms of sustainable economic, social and environmental benefits**

Details	How We Meet these Principles	Evidence	Improvements/Updates	RAG
C1	Defining outcomes			
We have a clear vision which is an agreed formal statement of the organisation's purpose and intended outcomes containing appropriate performance indicators, which provides the basis for the organisation's overall strategy, planning and other decisions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ A Fire &amp; Rescue Plan, drawing on the results of public consultation and a strategic analysis of the community safety trends, emerging issues and partner agency feedback, is prepared for each Commissioner's term of office. This document underpins the overarching ambitions for the Fire &amp; Rescue Authority which is supported by the Fire &amp; Rescue Service CRMP. The CRMP explains the approach the Service will take to support the Plan and sets out the planned activity to deliver and achieve the intended outcomes.</li><li>▪ The OPFCC is an established office that works beyond governance and scrutiny to ensure that there is a longer-term strategic direction around all aspects of fire and community safety and that when put into practical terms enables or influences delivery against the priorities.</li><li>▪ Performance indicators are agreed and reported to the PFCC, the Fire Senior Leadership Team and the public, showing how effectively the priorities are being delivered.</li><li>▪ A new CRMP was published in 2024 and takes into consideration feedback from the public.</li></ul>	A revised Police, Fire & Crime Plan has been developed for April 2025.		

Details	How We Meet these Principles	Evidence	Improvements/Updates	RAG
We specify the intended impact on, or changes for, stakeholders including citizens and service users. It could be immediately or over the course of a year or longer		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>CFRS publishes its CRMP to show direction of travel over the next four years.</li> <li>The Fire &amp; Rescue Service responds to all FOIs that it receives and has a publication scheme.</li> <li>The Fire &amp; Rescue Authority publishes its Fire &amp; Rescue Plan with an annual report identifying achievements throughout the year.</li> </ul>		
We deliver defined outcomes on a sustainable basis within the resources that will be available		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Public Accountability Conferences support the Fire &amp; Rescue Authority to monitor performance and budget progression. During 2024/2025 thematic reports presented at the meetings provided assurance on how the Fire &amp; Rescue Service responds to a number of issues</li> <li>An internal Fire Executive Board helps to drive and monitor the efficiency and effectiveness of the Fire &amp; Rescue Authority and Fire &amp; Rescue Service. It is the forum whereby the Commissioner can maintain oversight of the totality of the fire and rescue service in Cumbria. It enables senior officers from the Fire &amp; Rescue Authority and the Service to work together to review key issues/challenges affecting service delivery, and identify solutions, including how resources can be used.</li> <li>A Medium-Term financial Plan (MTFP) is produced annually, reviewed regularly and updated as necessary setting out the financial assumptions and demands upon the Service to highlight budgetary pressures and set out options to address any funding shortfalls to ensure sustainability. The MTFP is supplemented by a Capital Strategy and Reserves Strategy.</li> </ul>	The establishment of a Service Improvement Board will allow a focus on all aspects of the business to ensure outcomes are delivered.	

Details	How We Meet these Principles	Evidence	Improvements/Updates	RAG
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The 2024/2025 budget, council tax levels and MTFP, alongside the Capital, Reserves and Treasury Management Strategies were considered by the PFCC in proposing and setting the level of fire precept.</li> <li>▪ During 2024/2025, the Police, Fire and Crime Panel has continued to facilitate effective scrutiny of the Fire &amp; Rescue Service budget.</li> <li>▪ His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire &amp; Rescue Services (HMICFRS) Inspections further supports the Fire &amp; Rescue Authority in identifying areas that are working well and those that would benefit from improvement. This supports the Authority in holding the Chief Fire Officer to account for performance of the service. All reports are publicly available.</li> <li>▪ Regular news and social media posts published by both the Fire &amp; Rescue Authority and Service inform communities of how effectively the Service is performing.</li> </ul>		
We identify and manage risks to the achievement of outcomes.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Performance is reported through quarterly Public Accountability Conferences and regularly via the Fire Executive Board and Fire Senior Leadership Team.</li> <li>▪ The Fire &amp; Rescue Authority and the Fire &amp; Rescue Service undertake a continuous review of its risk management responsibilities by ensuring that it maintains an up-to-date Operational Risk Register and Strategic Risk Register. This is reported quarterly via the Fire Executive Board.</li> </ul>	Both risk registers to be merged into one holistic document	

Details	How We Meet these Principles	Evidence	Improvements/Updates	RAG
C2	Sustainable economic, social and environmental benefits			
We consider and balance the combined economic, social and environmental impact of policies, plans and decisions when taking service provision decisions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>A Capital Investment Strategy is in place, focused on future use, with links to the Medium-Term Financial Forecast and compliant with the Prudential Code. This has been revised to ensure compliance with the new requirements linking capital investment decisions with the Prudential Code and Treasury Management investment decisions.</li><li>Equality Impact Assessments are carried out on policies and procedures. This assesses the impact of any changes that may affect staff, stakeholders and the public.</li><li>Risk management processes are in place and reviewed regularly.</li><li>The Section 151 officer sits at the Senior Leadership Team and is involved in all formal decision-making processes for expenditure, including those that relate to any changes to programmes, policies and procedures. This helps to ensure value for money is achieved within a balanced and sustainable budget.</li></ul>			
Taking a longer-term view with regard to decision making, taking account of risk and acting transparently where there are potential conflicts between the organisation’s intended outcomes and short-term factors such as the political cycle or financial constraints	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>The Corporate Governance Framework provides the basis for decision-making and set outs the key roles and responsibilities of statutory officers.</li><li>The Fire &amp; Rescue Authority publishes on the Commissioner’s website:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Committee/Panel agendas and reports</li><li>Minutes of meetings</li><li>CCFRA decisions</li></ul></li></ul>			

Details	How We Meet these Principles	Evidence	Improvements/Updates	RAG
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Where necessary, advice is sought from Finance and Legal Services before any decision is made. All decision papers include a section where potential risk implications are identified, i.e., legal, human resource, equality, IT, etc.</li> <li>The Fire &amp; Rescue Authority and Fire &amp; Rescue Service has introduced a process to allow all key decisions to be logged.</li> </ul>		
	Determining the wider public interest associated with balancing conflicting interests between achieving the various economic, social and environmental benefits, through consultation where possible, in order to ensure appropriate trade-offs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Fire &amp; Rescue Authority and Fire &amp; Rescue Service decisions are required to be on decision paper to ensure that all issues are identified, and risk assessed. All decision papers are submitted for consideration to either the OPFCC Executive Team or the Fire Senior Leadership Team.</li> </ul>		
	We ensure that there is fair access to services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Fire &amp; Rescue Service resources are distributed so that it can respond in regard to risk and demand.</li> <li>Access to Home Fire Safety Visits is risk based and prioritises high risk individuals.</li> <li>Prevention material and awareness raising is delivered countywide based on identified risk.</li> </ul>		

**Core Principle D: Determining the interventions necessary to optimise the achievement of the intended outcomes.**

Details	How We Meet these Principles	Evidence	Improvements/Updates	RAG
D1	Determining interventions			
We ensure that decision makers receive objective and rigorous analysis, including achieved & intended outcomes and their associated risks.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>The Corporate Governance Framework includes a decision-making framework which ensures that all decisions are supported by all the relevant information, including financial, legal and other appropriate professional advice. Decisions are formally recorded and published subject to confidentiality requirements. There are formal arrangements in place to monitor against outcomes associated with decision making, performance and financial management against the Fire &amp; Rescue Authority and Fire &amp; Rescue Service. Monitoring arrangements and their frequencies are contained within the Fire &amp; Rescue Authority Accountability Framework. This framework enables detailed scrutiny against agreed and expected outcomes and allows for robust challenge and necessary intervention by the PFCC if the actions are not delivering the expected outcome.</li><li>The creation of a new finance team and the introduction of a new finance system means that the Fire &amp; Rescue Authority and Fire &amp; Rescue Service benefits from a focussed and knowledgeable set up that facilitates informed decision making.</li></ul>			

Details	How We Meet these Principles	Evidence	Improvements/Updates	RAG
We consider feedback from citizens and service users when making decisions about service improvements or where services are no longer required to prioritise competing demands.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Fire &amp; Rescue Authority has a Medium-Term Financial Planning process (MTFP) which integrates budget and corporate planning to match resources to the priorities (mid-year review of MTFP will take into account any revisions to priorities).</li> <li>There is an annual budget consultation involving the public, local businesses, and staff. Further stakeholder engagement with the public is achieved through social media messaging and promotion of specific consultations and surveys.</li> </ul>		
<b>D2: Planning interventions</b>				
We establish and implement robust planning and control cycles that cover strategic and operational plans, priorities and targets. Ensuring that they are flexible and agile to adapt delivery outputs and changing circumstances.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Fire &amp; Rescue Authority administers an internal Executive Board for Fire which is chaired by the Commissioner to make decisions.</li> <li>The Fire &amp; Rescue Service has in place a board structure that ensures the Services delivered across Cumbria are fit for purpose.</li> <li>The Fire &amp; Rescue Service have robust business continuity plans in place. The Service's approach to business continuity includes regular testing of its plans, both in isolation and with partners, thus ensuring resilience. If the Service does come under pressure, there is a degradation plan in place that allows for the prioritisation of resources to protect the most vulnerable. This is also tested regularly.</li> </ul>	Following the review of internal governance, changes to internal meeting and reporting structure to be implemented throughout 2025	
We engage with internal and external stakeholders in determining how services and other courses of action should be planned and delivered.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>During the last year, the Fire &amp; Rescue Authority and Fire &amp; Rescue Service have continued to build on existing collaboration and partnerships to address priorities in the Fire &amp; Rescue Plan. Projects have included:</li> <li>Working closely with the new Community Safety Partnerships in each of the Local Authority areas.</li> </ul>	During 2024/2025, the Service Level Agreements with the unitary authority have been reviewed to drive further efficiencies and ensure any future	

Details	How We Meet these Principles	Evidence	Improvements/Updates	RAG
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Formed a Blue Light Transformation Board to explore collaboration opportunities between fire and policing. This has resulted in the appointment of a new Joint Head of Estates which has led to improved joint working between the Fire &amp; Rescue Service, Cumbria Constabulary and the OPFCC.</li> <li>We have recently taken the lead in the Water Safety Partnership and Road Traffic Collision Partnership, ensuring activity is targeted and intelligence led. These are both excellent examples of how the Service can add real value and support the communities we serve.</li> <li>One of the legacies of the Local Government Reform process was the Fire &amp; Rescue Service currently has several Service Level Agreements with the unitary authorities. The Fire &amp; Rescue Service is working diligently to review these to drive efficiencies and ensure that any future delivery arrangements meet the needs of the Service.</li> </ul>	<p>arrangements meet the requirements of the Service.</p> <p>Consultation processes reviewed by HMICFRS as part of the inspection. The historic AFI in regard to community engagement was closed.</p>	
We consider and monitor risks facing each partner when working collaboratively including shared risks.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Fire &amp; Rescue Service identifies risks with both unitary authorities, through contract management of the Service Level Agreements and project management processes. There is an escalation process to the operational and strategic risks registers which are monitored by the Fire Executive Board and Senior Leadership Team.</li> </ul>	Appropriate mechanisms will need to be agreed with the OPFCC and Constabulary to identify and monitor risks of any new collaboration arrangements as and when they are implemented.	



Details	How We Meet these Principles	Evidence	Improvements/Updates	RAG
We have established performance indicators to identify how the performance of services and projects is to be measured.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The Fire &amp; Rescue Authority has established an internal governance board to help drive and monitor the efficiency and effectiveness of the Fire Service. It is the forum whereby the Fire &amp; Rescue Authority can maintain oversight of the totality of fire across Cumbria. Performance against budgets is monitored, which examines the progress against planned activity and spend against sets budgets. A quarterly performance report against a suite of key performance indicators is also provided highlighting any current issues or emerging trends.</li> <li>▪ During the course of 2024/25, the Fire &amp; Rescue Authority held the Chief Fire Officer to account through Public Accountability Conferences. Through this forum, the Fire &amp; Rescue Authority received assurance from the Fire Service across several areas of performance. In the February meeting, the Fire &amp; Rescue Authority approved the budget for Cumbria Fire &amp; Rescue Service.</li> <li>▪ The Commissioner in his capacity as the Fire Authority holds regular one-to-one meetings with the Chief Fire Officer. These internal meetings allow the Commissioner and the Chief Fire Officer to discuss strategic and financial issues, national considerations, HMICFRS and anything else that is relevant to the successful delivery of the fire service in Cumbria. This forum allows for full and frank conversations in a confidential environment.</li> <li>▪ The Fire &amp; Rescue Service carried out a review of its key performance indicators to ensure they were relevant and measurable. Performance is discussed monthly at a number of boards across the Service, and any exceptions raised through the Fire &amp; Rescue Authority Accountability Framework.</li> </ul>	Establishment of the Service Improvement Board will allow more focus on performance and individuals to be held to account by the Chief Fire Officer	

Details	How We Meet these Principles	Evidence	Improvements/Updates	RAG
We inform medium and long-term resource planning by drawing up realistic estimates of revenue and capital expenditure aimed at developing a sustainable funding strategy.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There is a Medium-Term Financial Planning process (MTFP) which integrates budget and corporate planning to match resources to the priorities (annual review of MTFP will take into account any revised corporate priorities).</li> <li>There is an annual budget consultation involving the public, local businesses, and staff. Further stakeholder engagement with the public is achieved through social media messaging and promotion of specific consultations and surveys.</li> <li>The budget for 2024/2025 has been balanced, however savings will be required from 2026/2027 onwards.</li> <li>Against this background, modelling of a range of financial scenarios through the Medium-Term Financial Planning process, undertaken by the Fire &amp; Rescue Authority, have continued to inform wider business planning and develop savings proposals, as a means of balancing the budget over the medium term.</li> </ul>	Resource planning will be improved through the delivery of an operational cover review which will provide the required evidence to inform decision making.	
<b>D3</b>	<b>Optimising Achievement of Intended Outcomes</b>			
We ensure that the services we commission achieve social value		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Fire &amp; Rescue Service has a Sustainable Procurement and Commissioning Strategy.</li> <li>A shared procurement function has been developed with Cumbria Constabulary which will consider the approach to social value for Fire as it has done for Policing.</li> </ul>		
We ensure the achievement of 'social value' through service planning and commissioning. The Public Services		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Sustainable Procurement and Commissioning Strategy ensures best value is achieved. This strategy is supported by the</li> </ul>		

Details	How We Meet these Principles	Evidence	Improvements/Updates	RAG
(Social Value) Act 2012 states that this is <i>“the additional benefit to the community .....over and above the direct purchasing of goods, services and outcomes”</i> .		<p>financial regulations and contract standing orders embed within the Corporate Governance Framework.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Frameworks used by the Service ensure social value is considered as part of any procurement process.</li> </ul>		
We ensure the medium-term financial strategy sets the context for ongoing decisions on significant delivery issues or responses to changes in the external environment that may arise during the budgetary period in order for outcomes to be achieved while optimising resource usage.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Fire &amp; Rescue Authority has a Medium-Term Financial Planning process (MTFP) which integrates budget and corporate planning to match resources to organisational priorities. The budget is prepared on zero-based budget principles.</li> <li>The MTFP is reviewed regularly and updated as necessary setting out the financial assumptions and demands upon the Service to highlight budgetary pressures and set out options to address any funding shortfalls to ensure sustainability. This is reported to the Fire Executive Board. The MTFP is supplemented by a Capital Strategy and Reserves Strategy.</li> </ul>		

**Core Principle E: Develop the capacity and capability of CCFRA / CFRS Staff to be effective and to deliver services effectively**

Details	How We Meet these Principles	Evidence	Improvements/Updates	RAG
E1: Developing CCFRA / CFRS capacity				
We review our operations, performance and use of assets on a regular basis to ensure their continued effectiveness.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>The Fire &amp; Rescue Service carries out a wide range of assurance functions that ensure we can review our performance and improve where possible. A key part of the Service's assurance includes Operational Assurance, Debriefs and Exercising. Another key area of focus is to ensure that we work effectively with our multi-agency partners under the Joint Emergency Service Interoperability Principles (JESIP). This approach is reinforced through the service using learning from inquests to inform policy, procedural reviews and to advise on any improvement to operational equipment where necessary. Operational Assurance is used to promote workforce learning by identifying examples of good practice and where improvements can be made in the delivery of the Service. This is captured through the Incident Monitoring processes. This work not only supports local learning but includes reporting through the national sector learning portals; Joint Organisational Learning (JOL) and the National Operational Learning (NOL).</li><li>Financial performance is regularly reported to the Fire Executive Board and is aligned with the budget planning process. In addition, the Police, Fire and Crime Panel continues to facilitate effective scrutiny of the Fire &amp; Rescue Service budget at its quarterly meeting.</li></ul>	The creation of the operational improvement group and the establishment of its relationship to the Service Improvement Board ensures that effectiveness and use of assets is considered in decision making on a regular basis.		

Details	How We Meet these Principles	Evidence	Improvements/Updates	RAG
We recognise the benefits of partnership and collaborative working where added value can be achieved.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Fire &amp; Rescue Service does not operate in isolation. It has in place Section 13/16 arrangements with our five neighbouring services that allow for mutual aid to be received and delivered. It also has access to a range of national assets if needed to resolve incidents.</li> <li>The Service works with other Northwest Services to share risk information on a regular basis and one of the areas where it is currently collaborating on is the impact of contaminants.</li> </ul>	The Fire & Rescue Authority has established an Executive Board – Working Together to explore further collaboration opportunities between fire and policing.	
We develop and maintain an effective workforce plan to enhance the strategic allocation of resources.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Fire &amp; Rescue Service has a three-year Learning &amp; Development Plan (2024-2027). The Workforce Development Group meets monthly to address needs in vacancies, recruitment, skills, development and succession planning.</li> </ul>	Develop a detailed Workforce Development Plan properly aligns to the Medium-Term Financial Plan.	
<b>E2</b>	<b>Developing the capability of CCFRA/ CFRS leadership</b>			
We develop the capabilities of senior management to achieve effective shared leadership and to enable the organisation to respond successfully to changing legal and policy demands as well as economic, political and environmental changes and risks.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Fire &amp; Rescue Service is a learning organisation and takes every opportunity to allow staff to develop. To that end a comprehensive 360-degree process has been introduced. All senior leaders have undergone this process and taken onboard the feedback. The Chief Finance Officer continues to receive support from the Police and Crime Commissioner's Treasurer's Society (PaCCTS) and the associated technical information service.</li> <li>The Chief Finance Officer is also a member of the NFCC Fire Finance Network for all aspects affecting the Fire sector.</li> <li>A number of senior managers have completed the Executive Leadership Programme (ELP).</li> </ul>	360 process needs to be implemented across the Service to fulfil one of the recommendations of the HMICFRS Culture and Values report.	

Details	How We Meet these Principles	Evidence	Improvements/Updates	RAG
	We ensure the Commissioner and the chief executive have clearly defined and distinctive leadership roles within a structure whereby the chief executive leads in implementing strategy and managing the delivery of Commissioner's objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The roles and responsibilities of the PFCC and his Executive Team are set out in the Corporate Governance Framework.</li> </ul>		
<b>E3</b>	<b>Developing the capability of staff within CCFRA/CFRS</b>			
	We develop the capability of staff within the Fire & Rescue Authority and Fire & Rescue Service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Workforce Development Group allows the Service to have informed discussions about the workforce and the training it needs to develop. The group also supports the identification and encouragement of talent, helping individuals to put their skills to best use by the Service.</li> <li>The Fire &amp; Rescue Service has also reviewed its promotion processes to ensure the right people with the right skills are promoted.</li> </ul>	The workforce plan needs to be developed to reflect the needs of all staff members including Green book.	
	We hold staff to account through regular performance reviews which take into account training or development needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Fire &amp; Rescue Service has an appraisal process that reviews performance and considers the training needs and career aspirations of staff.</li> </ul>	Completion rates for the Appraisal process need to be improved.	
	We ensure that there are arrangements to maintain the health and wellbeing of the workforce, both physical and mental wellbeing.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Service consults its employees on matters affecting health and safety, providing information instruction and training to all employees. In addition, the service has systems in place to support the reporting and investigation of all accidents and near misses. This helps in limiting the potential for recurrence, learning from incidents and creation of a safer environment with a positive health and safety culture.</li> </ul>	A new mental health App is being introduced which will facilitate easier access to more up to date information. This needs to be rolled out in 2025	

Details	How We Meet these Principles	Evidence	Improvements/Updates	RAG
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Service works with its Human Resources Team and the Occupational Health Team to promote and support the wellbeing of staff. The Service has a programme of health and wellbeing campaigns and has developed a cohort of mental health trainers and first aiders, thereby providing all staff with access to support for physical and mental wellbeing.</li> </ul>		
<b>E4</b>	<b>Developing the capability of members and volunteers appointed by the OPFCC</b>			
	We develop the capability of appointed members and volunteers to assist them in performing their roles.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Development sessions for the Joint Audit Committee members were held over the year.</li> <li>360-degree appraisals of senior officers were undertaken in June 2024.</li> <li>Throughout the year the Ethics and Integrity Panel has carried out a diverse range of thematic sessions. Prior to each of these they are provided with information to assist them understand the business area and officers/staff at the session provide further information. The Panel membership has a diverse range of backgrounds, skills and knowledge which assists with the different business areas.</li> </ul>		

## Core Principle F: Managing risks and performance through robust internal control and strong public financial management

Details	How We Meet these Principles	Evidence	Improvements/Updates	RAG
F1	Managing Risk			
We recognise that risk management is an integral part of all activities and must be considered in all aspects of decision making.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>The OPFCC has a Risk Management Strategy which is reviewed on a cyclical basis and was last reviewed in 2023. This was presented to the Joint Audit Committee in November 2023 who gave their approval.</li><li>The Fire &amp; Rescue Service also has a risk management policy considered by JAC.</li><li>The Fire Executive Board receives quarterly risk updates from both the Fire &amp; Rescue Authority and Service, ensuring the PFCC is fully sighted. This provides organisational assurance that the Authority and Service's current risk exposure is being managed and suitable controls and mitigations are in place.</li></ul>	Following a recommendation by JAC, the OPFCC will merge its risk register with that of the Service to provide one cohesive document.		
We implement robust and integrated risk management arrangements ensuring that they are work effectively.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>The Fire &amp; Rescue Authority Strategic and Operational risks are reviewed by staff on a quarterly basis. Each risk is scored based on probability and level of impact, and the outcome is rated using a Red, Amber or Green (RAG status). Updates are then reported to the Executive Team Gold for oversight and scrutiny at the Fire Executive Board.</li><li>The Fire &amp; Rescue Authority's strategic risk management arrangements are reported to the Joint Audit Committee on a six-monthly basis.</li></ul>			



Details	How We Meet these Principles	Evidence	Improvements/Updates	RAG
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Fire &amp; Rescue Service strategic risks are reviewed by staff on a regular basis. Updates are then reported to the Fire Senior Leadership Team for oversight and scrutiny as well as the Fire Executive Board and JAC.</li> </ul>		
	We ensure that responsibilities for managing individual risks are clearly allocated.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Each risk identified by the Fire &amp; Rescue Authority and the Service identify the risk holder and the overall risk manager for that area of business.</li> </ul>	New combined risk register to be created	
<b>F2</b>	<b>Managing Performance</b>			
	We ensure we monitor service delivery effectively by securing reports (including financial information) on service delivery, plans and progress towards outcome achievement.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Chief Fire Officer is held to account for delivery of fire objectives through Public Accountability Conferences (PACs). The dates for these meetings are agreed 12 months in advance.</li> <li>During 2024/2054 thematic reports presented at the Public Accountability Conferences provided assurance on how the Fire Service's responds to its demand across Cumbria</li> <li>At the Public Accountability Conference in February, the Fire &amp; Rescue Authority approved the budget for fire.</li> <li>Detailed financial reports are presented to, and scrutinised by, the Fire Executive Board. The reports include full details of performance against budget for the key reporting areas namely; revenue, capital, cash, reserves, and delivery of efficiencies and savings. Quarterly reports are also presented to and challenged by the Police, Fire and Crime Panel.</li> <li>Performance reports are presented to the Fire Senior Leadership Team on a regular basis, performance information is available to all staff via a range of Power BI dashboards and</li> </ul>		

Details	How We Meet these Principles	Evidence	Improvements/Updates	RAG
		<p>exceptions are raised by the Head of Safety and Assurance where necessary.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Relevant HMICFRS inspections (local, regional and national) and other regulatory reports are reviewed and monitored through the Fire Executive Board.</li> <li>▪ The Commissioner, in his capacity as the Fire Authority holds regular one-to-one meetings with the Chief Fire Officer.</li> </ul>		
<b>F2</b>	<b>Robust Internal Control</b>			
	We evaluate and monitor the Corporate Governance Framework, risk management arrangements and internal control on a regular basis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ A full review of the Corporate Governance Framework was carried out in 2024 to harmonise the requirements between the Fire Authority, Constabulary and the OPFCC. This ensures commonality of requirements around governance and controls across the Commissioners portfolio.</li> </ul>		
	We ensure additional assurance on the overall adequacy and effectiveness of the framework of governance, risk management and control is provided by the internal auditor.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Internal controls have also been reviewed through the annual process of management assurances and the annual internal audit plan.</li> </ul>	Recent audit gave reasonable assurance on the governance in place with only minor recommendations which have all been addressed.	
	We ensure effective counter fraud and anti-corruption arrangements are in place.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Robust arrangements for Anti-Fraud and Corruption are in place. These were presented to the Joint Audit Committee in November 2024 and approved.</li> <li>▪ The Fire &amp; Rescue Authority provides an annual report to the Joint Audit Committee on the effectiveness of these arrangements.</li> </ul>		
<b>F3</b>	<b>Managing Data</b>			

Details	How We Meet these Principles	Evidence	Improvements/Updates	RAG
We ensure there are effective arrangements for the safe collection, storage, use and sharing of data.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Fire &amp; Rescue Service has a Data Protection policy and guidance to support staff in receipting, storing and deleting data as appropriate.</li> <li>The Service also has an Information Governance Officer and a range of policies to ensure that data is shared, stored and managed in line with its requirements.</li> </ul>		
Where information is shared with other organisations we ensure there are effective arrangements for data sharing in place.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Fire &amp; Rescue Service has a number of information sharing agreements with partner agencies.</li> <li>Members of the Ethics and Integrity Panel and our volunteers all sign confidentiality agreements to cover any information they are made aware of as part of their respective roles.</li> </ul>	Review of existing data sharing protocols	
<b>F4</b>	<b>Strong Public Financial Management</b>			
Ensuring financial management supports both long-term achievement of outcomes and short-term financial and operational performance.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Fire &amp; Rescue Authority has a duty to comply with the key principles contained within the revised CIPFA statement of the 'Role of the Chief Financial Officer in Local Government' and the CCFRA continues to comply with 5 key principles of the CIPFA statement.</li> <li>The CFRS Chief Finance Officer (S151 Officer) is a qualified accountant and is a key member of the CFRS Senior Leadership Team and as such, has direct access to the Chief Fire Officer.</li> <li>The Chief Finance Officer is supported by a capable and fully resourced finance team in the Fire &amp; Rescue Service, who support the proper administration of the financial affairs, including leading the promotion and delivery of good financial management to safeguard public money at all times; to ensure the effective, efficient and economic use of</li> </ul>		

Details	How We Meet these Principles	Evidence	Improvements/Updates	RAG
		<p>resources; and to ensure that the short and long term implications of all material business decisions are fully considered and aligned to the Medium Term Financial Plan</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The main controls for financial management are set out in the Corporate Governance Framework – these are the Budget and Policy Framework and the Financial Regulations. These cover the arrangements for Financial Management, Financial Planning, Risk Management and Control of Resources, Financial Systems and Procedures and External arrangements. The Fire &amp; Rescue Authority also complies with the Prudential Framework for Local Authority Finance.</li> </ul>		
	We ensure well-developed financial management is integrated at all levels of planning and control, including management of financial risks and controls.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Financial implications and impact on service delivery is reported to Executive Team Gold, Fire Executive Board and Police, Fire and Crime Panel.</li> <li>An Expenditure Management Group is held monthly with budget managers and looks at management accounts , forecast spend, capital and efficiencies.</li> </ul>		

**Core Principle G: Implementing good practices in transparency, reporting and audit to deliver effective accountability.**

Details	How We Meet these Principles	Evidence	Improvements/Updates	RAG
<b>G1</b>	<b>Implementing good practice in transparency</b>			
We report at least annually on performance, value for money and the stewardship of its resources.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Throughout the year the Fire &amp; Rescue Authority has published regular financial monitoring information in a short and succinct format that aims to increase the transparency and accessibility of financial information. The outturn reports were presented to Police, Fire and Crime Panel in September 2024.</li> <li>An Annual Report is published in the autumn of each year.</li> </ul>		OPFCC Annual Report has been developed and published in autumn 2024.	
We ensure robust arrangements for assessing the extent to which the principles contained in the Framework have been applied and publishing the results on this assessment including an action plan for improvement and evidence to demonstrate good governance (annual governance statement)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Annual governance statement prepared annually including opinion by internal audit service on controls in place.</li> <li>Annual Governance Statement presented to and approved by Joint Audit Committee, which includes (if necessary) an action plan to address any significant control weaknesses.</li> <li>Annual governance statement prepared annually by the Fire and Rescue Service including opinion by internal audit service on controls in place. Annual Governance Statement presented to and approved by the Joint Audit Committee. Formally signed off by the Commissioner, Chief Executive and S151 Officer.</li> </ul>			

Details	How We Meet these Principles	Evidence	Improvements/Updates	RAG
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We will carry out a review of our strategic documentation to ensure a consistency of language between the AGS, and these other documents. We will aim to do this throughout 2025/26 and as key documents come up for review.</li> </ul>		
<b>G2</b>	<b>Implementing good practices in reporting</b>			
	We provide assurance on the work carried out by CCFRA/CFRS.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Fire &amp; Rescue Authority will publish an Annual Report in autumn. The report will highlight key challenges and achievements from the year and includes performance and financial information set out in a simple but informative way.</li> <li>An updated Code of Corporate Governance has been prepared for 2024/2025 in line with the 2016 CIPFA/Solace Good Governance Framework for Local Government.</li> <li>A review of the arrangements for internal audit have confirmed that the service meets the requirements of the Public Sector Internal Audit Standards (PSIAS) during 2024/25.</li> </ul>		
	We report on our performance, value for money and stewardship of our resources.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A comprehensive Risk Based Evidence Profile is available on the service website.</li> <li>The annual statement of accounts is presented to the Joint Audit Committee for scrutiny and is subsequently published on the OPFCC's website.</li> </ul>	.	
<b>G3</b>	<b>Assurance and effective accountability</b>			
	We ensure that recommendations for corrective action made by external audit are acted upon.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recommendations made by both internal and external audit are monitored through Executive Board Fire and the Senior Leadership Team, and are scrutinised by the Joint Audit Committee.</li> </ul>		

Details	How We Meet these Principles	Evidence	Improvements/Updates	RAG
We ensure an effective internal audit service with direct access to members is in place which provides assurance with regard to governance arrangements and recommendations are acted upon.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A review of the arrangements for internal audit have confirmed that the service meets the requirements of the Public Sector Internal Audit Standards (PSIAS) during 2024/25.</li> </ul>	New Auditors have been commissioned from 01/04/2025 due to failings in the service delivered by the previous company.	Yellow
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Implementation of recommendations arising from the internal audit plan, external audit reports and HMICFRS are monitored by the Joint Audit Committee.</li> </ul>		Green