



SCOTTISH
FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE

Working together for a safer Scotland

Good Governance Framework

Working together for a safer Scotland



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Introduction

Corporate governance is the way in which organisations are directed, controlled, and led. It defines relationships and the distribution of rights and responsibilities among those who work with and in the organisation, determines the rules and procedures through which the organisation's objectives are set, and provides the means of attaining those objectives and monitoring performance. Importantly, it defines where accountability lies throughout the organisation.

Good corporate governance is fundamental to any effective organisation and is at the heart of good public services, contributing to the achievement of National Outcome 16 – 'our public services are high quality, continually improving, efficient and responsive to local people's needs'.

Our SFRS Good Governance Framework builds on our **Code of Corporate Governance** first introduced in 2016 ('the Code') and outlines our continued commitment to upholding high standards of corporate governance by setting out the principles and supporting characteristics we will apply to ensure we are achieving our intended outcomes while always acting in the public interest.

It also embodies and supports our values of Safety, Teamwork, Respect, and Innovation. In the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS), this means doing the right things, in the right way, for the right people, in a timely, inclusive, open, honest, and accountable manner.

Our Framework focuses on the role of the non-executives (the Board) and executives (Strategic Leadership Team) of the SFRS in upholding good corporate governance, ensuring it runs through our entire organisation and has drawn on best practice from across the public, private and third sectors. Through this it is intended that we support our greatest asset, our workforce, in the delivery of our services to achieve local outcomes for our communities.

The Framework will evolve in line with best practice and through our processes for continuously reviewing and improving the effectiveness of our governance arrangements, while fully supporting our Strategic Plan.

Our Good Governance Framework is also intended to provide our stakeholders with a clearer high-level understanding of how we operate and do business. It aligns to our **SFRS Governance and Accountability Framework**, which explains and defines our relationship with the Scottish Government and is also linked but distinct to the **Fire and Rescue Framework for Scotland**, a statutory document made under section 40 of the Fire (Scotland) Act 2005 (as amended), which sets out the Scottish Ministers' strategic priorities for the SFRS.

Purpose

The SFRS meets its corporate governance requirements and expectations in many ways. The purpose of the Framework therefore is to bring together the various strands of our corporate governance arrangements into one overarching framework document that demonstrates our commitment to upholding good corporate governance in a way that is easier to understand.

The focus of the Framework is on the Board (Non-executives) and the Strategic Leadership Team (Executives), it is designed to assist them in performing their role of directing, controlling, and leading the SFRS in a fit and proper manner.

The Framework will also be cascaded to management who directly support the Board and Strategic Leadership Team (SLT) in fulfilling this role and our workforce who are integral to achieving improved local outcomes through the delivery of our priorities and strategic objectives.

By following this Framework, we aim to deliver high standards of Corporate Governance, which we believe will lead to better service delivery and ultimately, better outcomes for the communities of Scotland.

We are responsible for ensuring that we deliver our services in accordance with the law and our statutory responsibilities, that we safeguard and properly account for public money and that this money is used in accordance with Best Value principles.

The Framework sets out the manner in which we will operate to meet these responsibilities and therefore maintain public confidence in the SFRS as a public body.

At the heart of the Framework lies six core principles of good corporate governance, each with its supporting characteristics that outline how we will demonstrate application of the principles.

The six principles we have adopted are taken from the 'Good Governance Standard for Public Services' That was developed by the Chartered Institute for Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA).

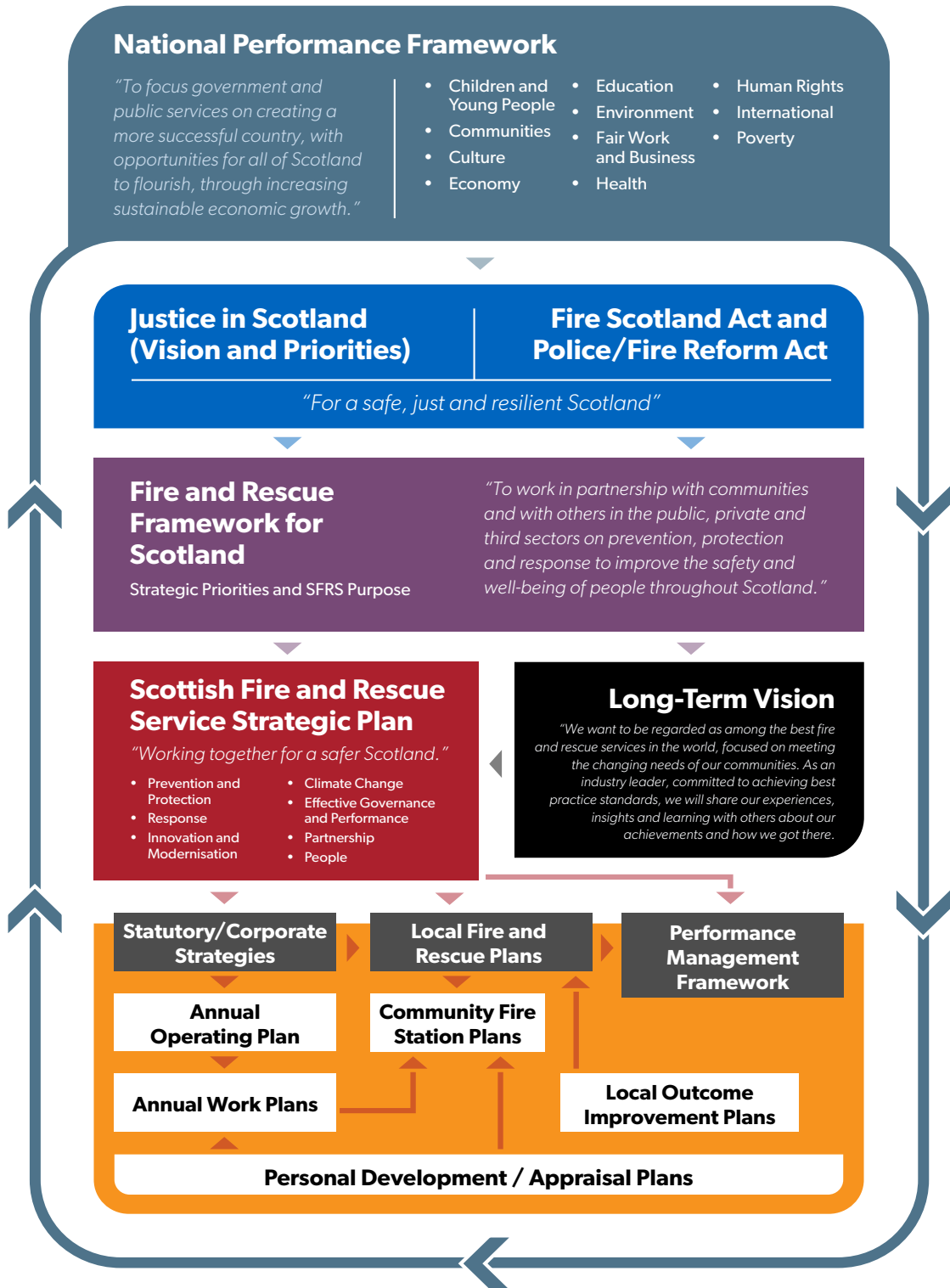
By adopting these principles, we will be acting consistently with the principles of good governance, a requirement of the Fire (Scotland) Act 2005, as amended by the Police and Fire Reform (Scotland) Act 2012 and following best practice promoted by the Scottish Government in publications such as 'On Board: A Guide for Board Members of Public Bodies in Scotland'.

Using the six principles of good corporate governance as a basis for our Framework, provides us with a sound structure to assess and ultimately report on the effectiveness of our corporate governance in the Annual Governance Statement.

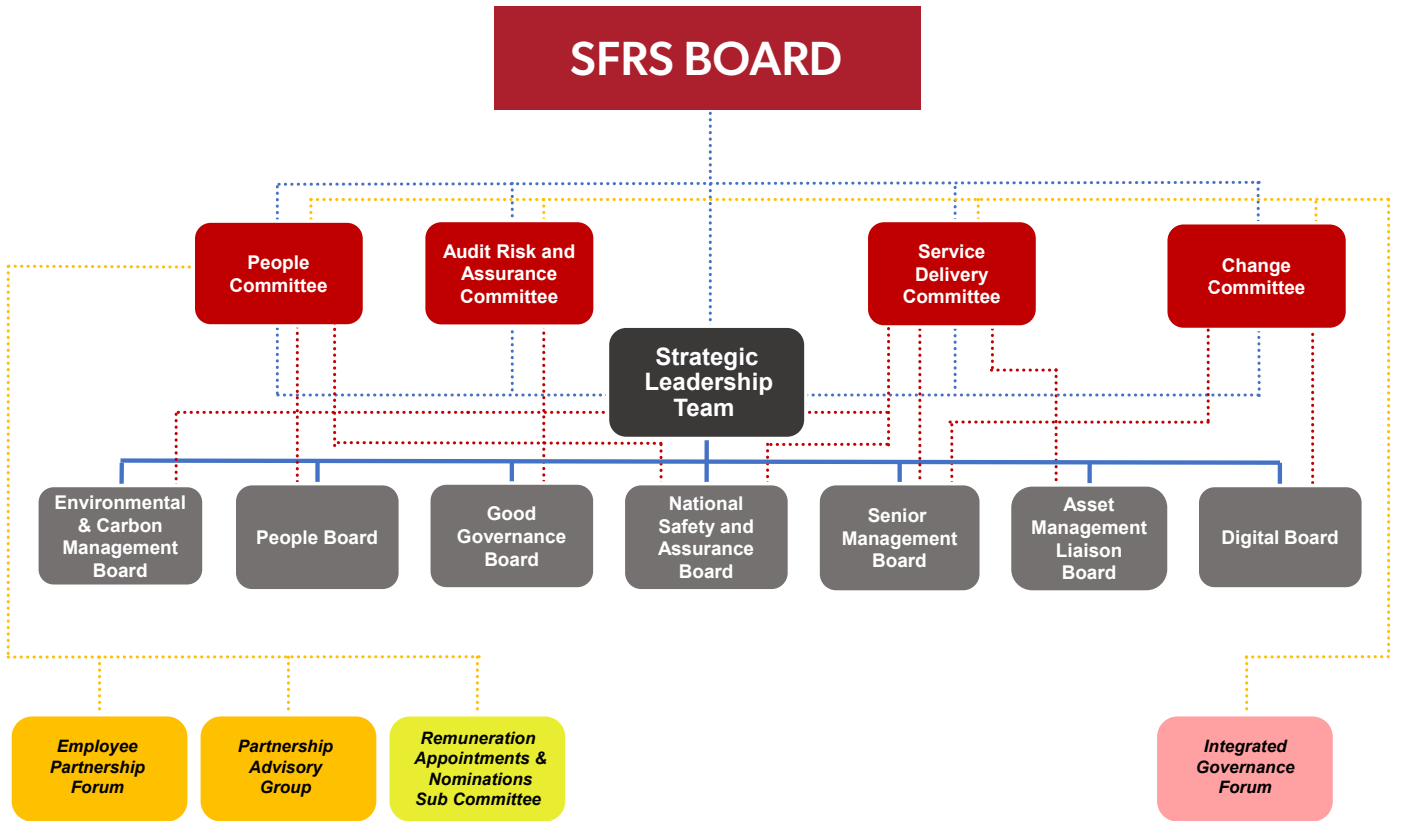
Internal audit and External audit will also benefit from the structured approach, allowing them to direct their independent assurance work on corporate governance more effectively.

3 Strategic Context

The diagram below is a basic representation of the SFRS strategic planning process from the Scottish Government National Performance Framework through to Service personnel’s individual development plan’s/personal appraisals. The key strategic documents for the Service are the 3 year strategic plan and the long term vision.



4 Governance Structure



Key:

- Executive Links to SLT
- SLT Links to Board and Committees
- Executive Links to Committees
- Sub Committee/Groups/Forum links to Committees

Subject to potential change in 2023/24.

Principles of Good Corporate Governance	
1	We will focus on our purpose and outcomes for the people and communities of Scotland
2	We will perform effectively in clearly defined functions and roles
3	We will promote and demonstrate the values of the organisation and the principles of good governance through behaviour
4	We will take informed, transparent decisions and manage risk effectively
5	We will develop the capacity and capability of the Board and Strategic Leadership Team to be effective
6	We will engage with the communities of Scotland and other stakeholders and make accountability real

The Good Governance Standard for Public services sets out six core principles of good corporate governance, which form the basis of our Framework.

The following pages of our Framework set out how we will go about applying these six principles to our work and therefore demonstrating our commitment to upholding high standards of corporate governance.

This also builds on the nine principles for the conduct of people in public life that were established by the Committee on Standards in Public Life.

Known as the Nolan principles, these are: selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty, and leadership, duty (public service) and respect.

We will focus on our purpose and outcomes for the people and communities of Scotland

What does this mean?

- Being clear about our purpose and its intended outcomes for the people and communities of Scotland.
- Making sure we enable our workforce to deliver a high-quality service.
- Identifying and taking steps to meet the needs of the diverse communities we serve.
- Making sure that we secure best value for taxpayers.

How will we demonstrate this?

- Show our commitment to public service delivery and reform by ensuring that our strategies and plans are aligned to the National Performance Framework, National Outcomes, Fire and Rescue Framework and key principles of public service reform.
- Take individual and collective responsibility for clearly communicating to our internal and external stakeholders our purpose and mission, and the strategic priorities and objectives to achieve our intended outcomes.
- Respond effectively, to any changes in our operating environment and the challenges we face by maintaining a strong focus on strategic and financial planning that will assure the long-term sustainability of the functions we deliver.
- Enable our workforce and other stakeholders to co-design and shape our services by ensuring a structured, inclusive approach to seeking stakeholder views on their needs and concerns is incorporated into our strategic planning process.
- Show our commitment to the public sector equality duty by ensuring that our Equality and Human Rights Impact Assessment Process and Island Community Impact Assessment is used to inform our decisions when planning our services.
- Secure appropriate strategic oversight of performance through a robust Performance Management Framework, which is supported by effective management systems to track progress against priorities and objectives, and outcomes at national and local levels.
- Ensure, where available, comparable performance information from other organisations is used to benchmark our performance.
- Show our commitment to the duty of Best Value by taking a systematic approach to self-evaluation and continuous improvement in performance and outcomes, including arrangements for reporting our performance publicly.

Where is the evidence that shows we are demonstrating this?

- Publish on our website and intranet our Strategic Plan, associated Annual Operating Plans and Local Fire and Rescue Plans.
- Have a Board Members Communication and Engagement Strategy in place for delivering effective Board communication and engagement activities.
- Publish on our website, Board reports and relevant Committee reports relating to our plans for seeking internal and external stakeholder views and how their responses inform our strategic planning process.
- Publish on our website the results of Equality and Human Rights Impact and Island Community Impact Assessments.
- Publish on our website our financial strategy and annual budgets, which outline how we will fund our plans and demonstrate how we will deliver best value and ensure long term sustainability.
- Publish on our website, Board reports and relevant Committee reports relating to ongoing performance monitoring and scrutiny, and end of year statutory reporting.
- Publish on our website all external assessments of our performance and best value, including those provided by Internal Audit, External Audit, His Majesty's Fire Service Inspectorate and Audit Scotland, and our responses to addressing any recommendations.
- Our method of self-assessment and programme of self-assessment and continuous improvement will be coordinated and monitored by our Service Improvement function.
- Monitor and scrutinise our performance against agreed objectives and outcomes at public meetings of the Board and relevant Committees and have minuted records of the outcomes published on our website.

We will perform effectively in clearly defined functions and roles

What does this mean?

- Being clear about the functions of the Board.
- Being clear about the responsibilities of the Board and the SLT, and making sure that those responsibilities are carried out.
- Being clear about relationships between the Board and the public.



How will we demonstrate this?

- Clearly define and communicate the roles and responsibilities of the Board and that of the Chair, individual Board Members, the Chief Officer, Accountable Officer, and individual members of the SLT and ensure they are understood.
- Be clear about the strategic governance role of the Board, by publishing a statement outlining the Board's approach to performing its main functions and the processes it uses to hold the SLT to account.
- Ensure a constructive and effective working relationship exists between our Board Members and executive officers, where we operate on the basis of the Board and SLT working as a team.
- Establish arrangements for clarifying delegated authority to the Chief Officer and members of the SLT, and the decisions reserved to the Board, which are consistent with the Scottish Public Finance Manual and appropriate to our objectives and circumstances.
- Regularly review the performance of the Board as a whole; individual Committees; individual Board Members and individual officers of the SLT, to ensure that we continue to perform our functions, roles, and responsibilities to the highest possible standards.
- Ensure the Board directs and controls the SFRS in the public interest and is accountable to the public for its decisions and actions.
- Take steps to support our workforce and the communities we serve to participate in public life.

Where is the evidence that shows we are demonstrating this?

- Publish on our website and make available to all Board Members and executives of the SLT, copies of the SFRS Governance and Accountability Framework Document, which clarifies the functions of the Board and the roles and responsibilities, and accountabilities of the non-executives, executives, and Accountable Officer.
- Publish on our website and make available to all Board Members and executives of the SLT the terms of reference for all our Committees.
- Publish on our website our Scheme of Delegations (incorporating matters reserved for the Board), and review this periodically.
- Provide all members of the SLT with up to date and relevant job descriptions.
- Have a programme of strategy days in place for the Board and SLT to work together to promote joint problem solving, to address strategic issues.
- Make our meetings of the Board and Committees open to the public, enabling them to observe how members of the Board and SLT perform individually and collectively, and how the Board hold the SLT to account.
- Publish on our website, Board and Committee reports relating to the arrangements for annually reviewing Board and Committee effectiveness, including the outcome of these annual reviews.
- Have an induction programme in place for any new members of the Board and SLT.
- Have a programme of annual appraisals in place for Members of the Board and SLT.
- Publish on our website Board and Committee meeting reports and minutes, incorporating all key decisions that have been made by the Board and reflection on the impact these have made once in place 12 months following.
- Publish on our website, our Communications and Engagement Strategy, setting out the principles and objectives for engaging effectively with the public and our stakeholders.

We will promote and demonstrate the values of the organisation and the principles of good governance through behaviour



What does this mean?

- Putting our organisational values of Safety, Teamwork, Respect, and Innovation into practice.
- Behaving in ways that uphold and exemplify effective governance, including demonstrating leadership on the grounds of equality, diversity, inclusion, human rights, and social justice.
- Demonstrating professional, dignified, and respectful behaviours and tackling those behaviours that fall short of this standard.

How will we demonstrate this?

- Actively publicise and model our values, expected standards of conduct, ethics and behaviour to all staff and relevant stakeholders.
- Ensure the application of these values guides our decision-making and are a basis for developing appropriate and effective relationships within the organisation, with our staff, partners, and other stakeholders; and they underpin our key policies.
- Discharge our public duties in a manner that ensures Board Members and staff take decisions objectively and steps are taken to avoid or deal with any conflicts of interest, whether actual or perceived.
- Through working towards our Equality Outcomes.
- Maintain effective processes for reporting, investigating, and dealing with occasions where standards fall below those expected and where they exceed expectations.
- Maintain effective arrangements to prevent, detect, investigate, and prosecute attempted fraud, corruptions, other unlawful acts, and unethical behaviour.
- Ensure that engagement with the Service is accessible to all sections of the community and recognise the benefits available from a diverse community.
- Ensure that employment by the Service is accessible to all sections of the community; that selection processes are objective, transparent and fair, and that employees feel valued and respected regardless of individual differences.
- Ensure that appropriate mechanisms are in place to measure how well we are living by our values and taking action to reinforce them.

Where is the evidence that shows we are demonstrating this?

- Publish on our website and iHub (internal) and market in SFRS properties, our values framework.
- Establish arrangements for appraising staff against our values and incorporate them into induction programmes and development programmes for staff.
- Publish on our website and iHub (internal) our Board Members Code of Conduct and establish arrangements for appraising Board Members against the provisions of the Code.
- Make our meetings of the Board and Committees open to the public and adopt a hybrid approach of virtual and face-to-face meetings enabling the public to observe the conduct and behaviour of members of the Board and SLT.
- Publish on our website, Board and Committee reports, and minutes demonstrating how our values have been applied in decision making.
- Publish and maintain Board Members and SLT Members register of interests and have arrangements in place for declaring interests at Board, Committee and SLT meetings.
- Publish on our website our Mainstreaming and Equality Outcomes Reports.
- Publish and raise awareness of our anti-fraud statement and response plan, whistleblowing policy and complaints handling procedure, and seek opinions from the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee and Internal Audit on the adequacy and effectiveness of these arrangements.
- Appoint an individual to undertake the statutory duties of a Standards Officer, and act as the principal liaison officer between the organisation and the Standards Commission.
- Publish on our website and iHub (internal) our Recruitment and Selection Policy.
- Monitor and scrutinise the effectiveness of our values framework at meetings of the People Committee.
- Provide key examples of our innovation activity across the Service.

We will take informed, transparent decisions and manage risk effectively



What does this mean?

- Putting our organisational values of Safety, Teamwork, Respect and Innovation into practice.
- Behaving in ways that uphold and exemplify effective governance, including demonstrating leadership on the grounds of equality, diversity, inclusion, human rights, and social justice.
- Demonstrating professional, dignified, and respectful behaviours and tackling those behaviours that fall short of this standard.

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- Appoint an individual to undertake the statutory duties of a Standards Officer, and act as the principal liaison officer between the organisation and the Standards Commission.
- Publish on our website and iHub (internal) our Recruitment and Selection Policy.
- Monitor and scrutinise the effectiveness of our values framework at meetings of the People Committee.
- We will continue to develop our approach to performance management, providing greater access to performance information across all parts of the service by 2024.
- Demonstrate progress against the objectives of the Business Intelligence Strategy and providing accessible performance products across the Service.

We will develop the capacity and capability of the Board and Strategic Leadership Team to be effective



What does this mean?

- Making sure that Board Members and officers of the SLT have the skills, knowledge and experience they need to perform well and maximise their ability to contribute to improved outcomes.
- Developing the capability of people with governance responsibilities and evaluating their performance, as individuals and as a group.
- Striking a balance, in the membership of the Board, between continuity and renewal.

How will we demonstrate this?

- Regularly review the performance of the Board as a whole, individual Committees, individual Board Members, and individual officers of the SLT to ensure we are performing our roles well, both individually and collectively.
- Ensure that all Members of the Board and SLT are provided with opportunities for structured learning and development according to individual and organisational needs.
- Ensure that there are regular reviews of the effectiveness of our training and development, and performance review arrangements for Members of the Board and SLT.
- Identify opportunities for learning from past actions and ensure that lessons learned become embedded in the future behaviour of the Board and SLT and are shared with other organisations.
- Make use of the professional qualifications, key strengths, and expertise of Board Members, so they are being used to good effect to add value to the functioning of the Board and helping to build capacity.
- Show a real commitment to succession planning by ensuring robust arrangements are in place that address Board and SLT skills and diversity requirements for the medium and long term and support Scottish Government's priority for the SFRS to be more representative of the people and communities of Scotland.

Where is the evidence that shows we are demonstrating this?

- Publish on our website, Board and Committee reports relating to the arrangements for annually reviewing Board and Committee effectiveness, and the outcomes of these annual reviews.
- Have an induction programme in place for any new Members of the Board and SLT.
- Have a programme of annual appraisals in place for Members of the Board and SLT.
- Develop a Board Member's CPD Framework that will enable them to access professional and personal learning and development opportunities.
- Positive action to continue a Board membership that is broadly reflective of the wider Scottish Population with a 50:50 gender split being maintained where possible.
- Maintain a Board Skills Matrix, linked to our strategic priorities and objectives, for identifying skills gaps and areas of strength and have plans in place for balancing skills and filling skills gaps within reasonable timescales.
- Maintain a Remuneration, Appointments and Nominations Sub-committee with responsibilities for effective corporate oversight of the succession planning arrangements for the SLT and Board Members. Through the Chair of the Board, provide advice to Ministers about the Board's membership needs.

We will engage with the communities of Scotland and other stakeholders and make accountability real



What does this mean?

- Taking an active and planned approach to dialogue with, and accountability to, the public and stakeholder groups.
- Encouraging and enabling the participation of communities in public life.
- Taking an active and planned approach to meet responsibilities to staff.

How will we demonstrate this?

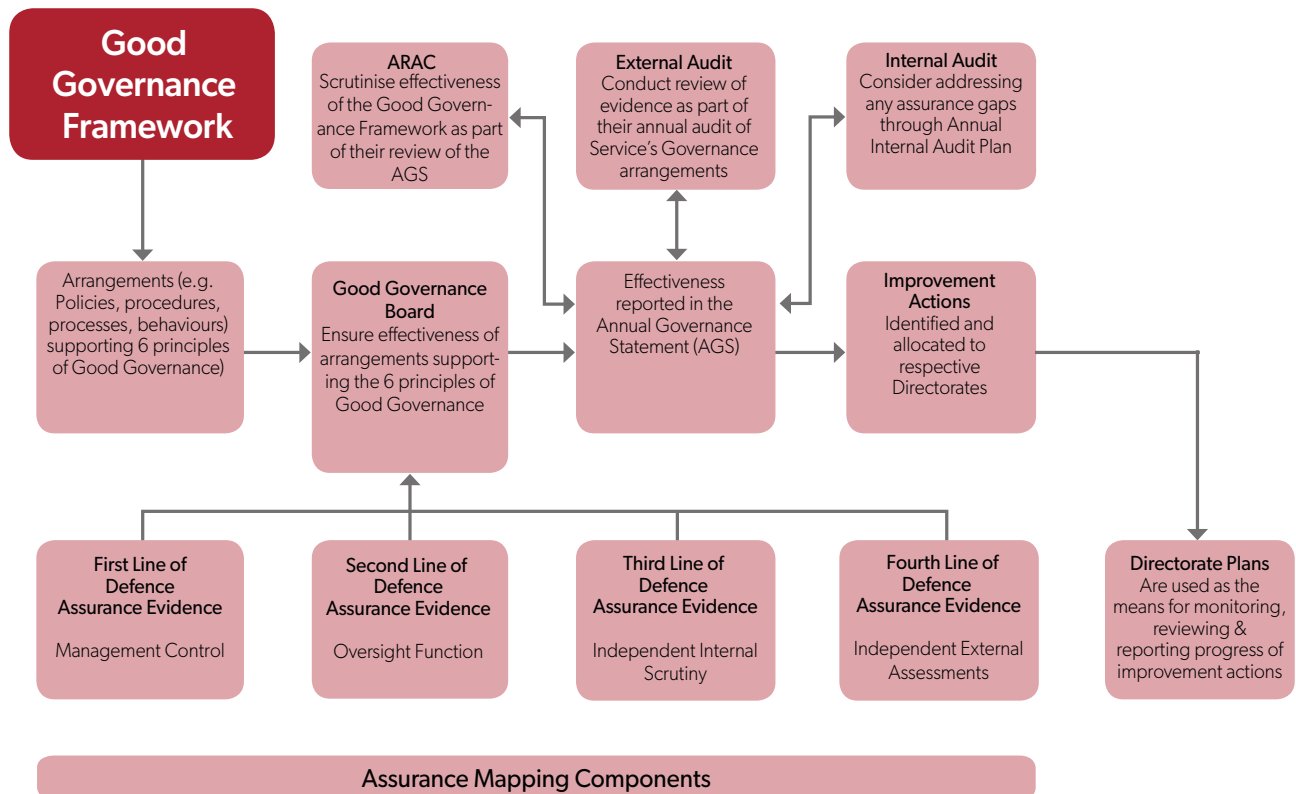
- Maintain effective arrangements to enable comments, complaints, and commendations to be notified to the Service, through the application of accessible communication methods.
- Respond to the declared and anticipated needs of communities in the deployment of different methods of communication.
- Effectively deploy modern technology to improve the ability for our stakeholders to engage and provide two-way communication. Examples of this include online consultation capabilities and improved external websites and internal intranets.
- Implement a new Communications and Engagement Strategy. This will be a new strategy to increase two-way communications and engagement and to secure opportunities for stakeholders to influence the direction and delivery of the Service.
- Ensure that all Board meetings and reports are accessible to the public except where legislation requires confidentiality to be preserved.
- Maintain arrangements for communicating, consulting, and seeking feedback from all sections of our communities and key stakeholders about our relevant strategic plans and services.
- Maintain processes to consult with staff and their representatives.

Where is the evidence that shows we are demonstrating this?

- Publish on our website details of how to make comments, complaints, and commendations. This will include arrangements for making contact in person; by letter; by telephone and by completing a web form on the SFRS website.
- Regularly review the accessibility and transparency of our communication methods, using tools such as the Equality and Human Rights Impact Assessment Process and customer feedback.
- Measure the success of our engagement through a 'Matrix Approach,' including increased engagement through online channels and regular reporting and feedback monitoring of both internal and external engagement meetings. This analysis will allow us to determine both improvements in engagement and the quality of our relations with stakeholders.
- Build in regular 'temperature check' analysis of stakeholders as part of the Communications and Engagement Strategy. This will allow us to determine if we are improving stakeholder engagement and their sense of being able to influence and shape decisions and direction.
- Enable all Board meetings to be open to the public, and all reports and minutes available on our website and ensure that other relevant documents to be made available under Freedom of Information provisions.
- Publish on our website details of current consultations and how to make comments and provide feedback on our relevant strategic plans and services.

Annual Review and Reporting

Our Framework provides us with a mechanism against which the effectiveness of our governance arrangements can be reviewed. The following diagram therefore illustrates the steps we will take to demonstrate how well the Framework has operated in practice, based on an annual assessment of the effectiveness of the arrangements underpinning each of the principles of good governance.



Our Annual Assessment process will assess the effectiveness of our overall governance, risk management and internal control arrangements.

The results of this assessment will be used to:

- Identify actions for continuously improving corporate governance.
- Identify new and emerging governance issues.
- Inform the work of Internal Audit.
- Prepare the Annual Governance Statement which is scrutinised by the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee and then publicly reported in the Annual Report and Accounts.

Assurance Framework – four lines of defence

Our AGS Assurance Framework, provides a structured means of identifying and mapping the main sources of assurance in the organisation and co-ordinating this evidence to provide an overall opinion of the adequacy and effectiveness of the SFRS's risk management and internal control arrangements.

A significant amount of work has been completed since the formation of the single Service with all recommendations from previous audits being fully incorporated into the SFRS Assurance Plan and reported back through the Internal Audit team and Audit and Risk Assurance Committee (ARAC).

This work also confirmed that the assurance mapping exercise has evolved and matured to ensure robust governance and internal control measures, aligning to the Scottish Public Finance Manual (SPFM).

The overall Framework strengthens our governance arrangements through the introduction of a formal Policy for Preparing the Annual Governance Statement on behalf of the Accountable Officer. Together with the dedicated e-learning training programme, Improvement Action Plans, and Executive monitoring through our Good Governance Board (GGB).

This additional monitoring increases the level of scrutiny and assurance the Chief Officer can give as Accountable Officer as part of our continuous improvement and prior to being put before the ARAC.

To ensure increased governance and assurance around potential fraud activities within SFRS, all Heads of Function

are required to complete a Fraud Risk Assessment of their function and provide details of any areas that have been identified as having risk of fraud, an area that formed part of earlier Internal Audit outcomes.

These arrangements ensure robust processes are in place and that they remain under continual review. This also provides the SFRS with a model to illustrate and provide clarity regarding the risks, controls and relationships that aim to improve effectiveness of our risk management systems.

Our Assurance in summary means the **“confidence based on sufficient evidence that internal controls are in place, operating effectively and objectives are being achieved”**.

The Four Lines of Defence model considers management control as the first line of defence in risk management, while the second line of defence includes the various risk controls and compliance oversight functions established by the management.

The third line of defence includes independent assurance through our internal auditors and finally the fourth line of defence includes the independent assurance through our external auditors / methods. The organisation's wider governance framework requires each of these “lines” to play a distinct role.

Oversight of the assurance provided by the lines of defence is provided by the Executive governance structures and the Board and its Sub-Committees.

AUDIT



Is an umbrella term generally used to describe a systematic and independent review and investigation on a certain subject matter.

There are many types of audits including: financial, optional, statutory, compliance and so on. The majority of which follow a set of agreed standards.

ASSURANCE



Is an objective examination of evidence for the purpose of providing an independent assessment on governance, risk management and control processes for the organisation.

Source: Institute of Internal Auditors

AUDIT UNIVERSE

This is a record of all services of the organisation that could be examined from an audit perspective. It is not an audit plan but can be used to aid audit planning showing previous work.

In addition, there will be issues that sit outside of the audit universe that don't neatly fall into a service/structure e.g. Brexit.

INTERNAL AUDIT

Internal auditing is an independent, objective assurance and consulting activity designed to add value and improve an organisation's operations.

It helps an organisation accomplish its objectives by bringing a systematic, disciplined approach to evaluate and improve the effectiveness of risk management, control and governance processes. Source: public sector internal audit standards

EXTERNAL AUDIT

Statutory external audit is an independent examination to enable the auditor to express an opinion on the financial statements.

In addition, the wider scope of public audit includes assessments and conclusions on: financial management, financial sustainability, governance and transparency and value for money / Best Value.

INTEGRATED ASSURANCE

A single organisation wide view of risk and control derived from assurance activity undertaken across the lines of defence.

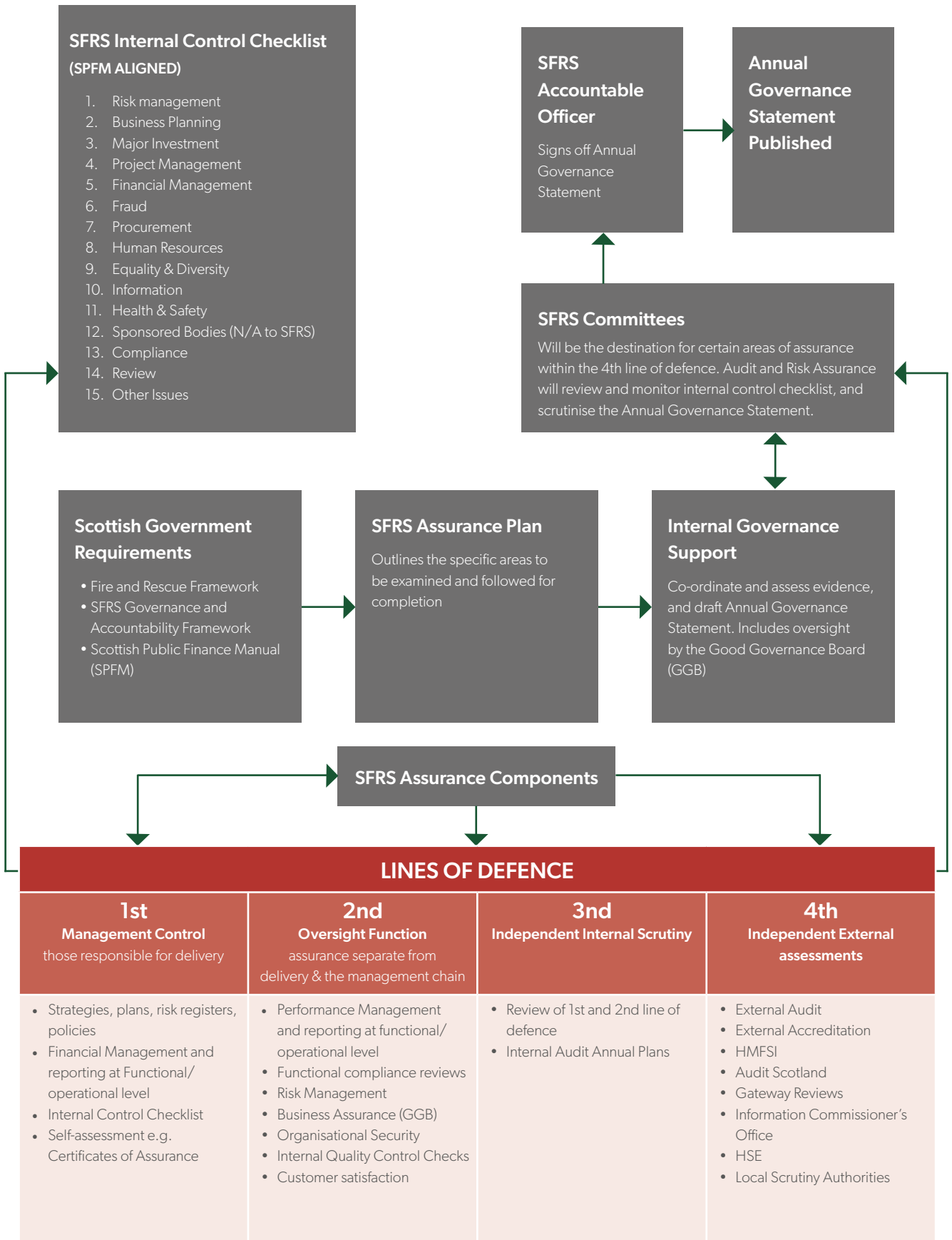
ARAC require a view on the adequacy of controls across the organisation.

Complex organisations receive assurance aims to take a step back and draw together the outcome from all activities over the year to assist the ARAC.

HMFSI WORK

A broader range of work including elements of both audit and assurance in addition to other scrutiny reviews, Service Delivery Area, inspections, thematic reviews, continuous improvement reviews.

Assurance Framework



Ongoing Assurance on adequacy and effectiveness of the arrangements for Governance, Risk and Internal Control

7 Integrated Assurance Mapping

SFRS Assurance mapping is developing techniques which will enable a visual representation of comfort (assurance) activities as they apply to a specific set of risks or compliance requirements facing the SFRS.

Assurance maps can be a powerful tool providing great insights for boards, senior management and audit committees. By allowing the decision-makers to take appropriate comfort from the assurance provided, these maps maximise the value of that assurance for the whole organisation.

With an assurance map, the SFRS Board will have evidence to support its assertions as to the state of internal control in any public reports and as communicated to the external auditors and stakeholders.

With a map, the assurance-related work of the individuals operating within the four lines of defence can be best directed to avoid overlaps.

In its implementation of combined assurance and mapping for 2023/24, SFRS will look to identify the components of combined assurance. This will enable SFRS to integrate, co-ordinate and align risk management and assurance processes aligned to our existing SFRS Assurance Framework and our lines of defence.

Integrated Assurance will provide a single organisation wide view of risk and control derived from assurance activity undertaken across our lines of defence.

Below is an example of a simple assurance map and something as mentioned SFRS will begin to explore and develop.

	1st Line		2nd Line		3rd Line	4th Line	
	Internal Control Checklist	Self-assessment	Risk Management	Functional Compliance Reviews	Internal Audit Annual Plans	External Audit	HMFSI
Financial Reporting	Substantial	Substantial	Substantial	Substantial	Substantial	Substantial	Substantial
Financial Controls	Substantial	Insufficient	Substantial	Reasonable	Insufficient	Substantial	Substantial
Legal	Substantial	Insufficient	Substantial	Reasonable	Insufficient	Substantial	Insufficient
ICT	Reasonable	Substantial	Substantial	Reasonable	Substantial	Limited	Insufficient
Fraud	Reasonable	Substantial	Limited	Substantial	Substantial	Limited	Substantial
Health & Safety	Reasonable	Substantial	Limited	Substantial	Substantial	Substantial	Substantial
People	Reasonable	Substantial	Substantial	Substantial	Substantial	Limited	Substantial

Key:

Substantial	Reasonable	Limited	Insufficient
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Assurance Mapping will be the starting point of our journey, and we will require our Internal Auditor to assist and support the SFRS in achieving integrated assurance.

It is our aspiration for our Assurance Mapping to give a visual representation of the assurance provided across the organisation:

- Covering all (or key) risks / processes
- Identifying all assurance providers
- Indicating the extent and effectiveness of assurance provided

In summary, it will act as a stocktake of the assurance levels of the organisation, reviewing where these assurances are found and how effective they are.

Our assurance will look to relate to business process and control activity; however, it will also identify where non-

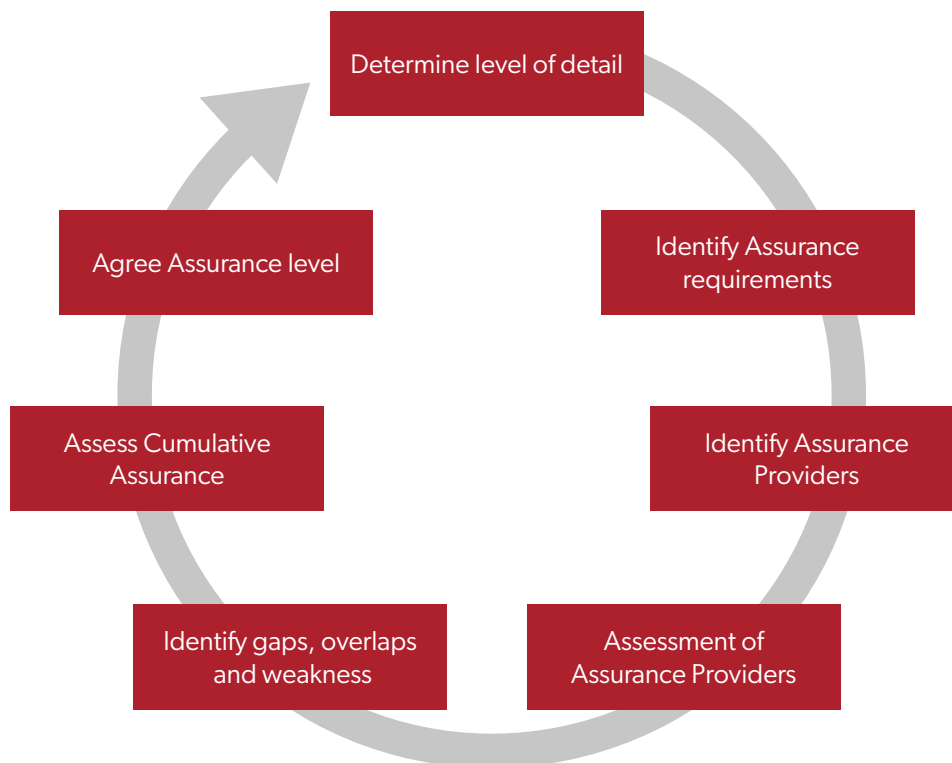
business process-based assurance is also being received e.g. Health & Safety audits, quality control reviews, etc.

This approach will provide an overview to the SFRS Board, Audit and Risk Assurance Committee, Strategic Leadership Team and also our assurance providers of:

- The assurance activity that is being undertaken across the organisation (quantum not quality)
- Gaps in assurance (risks and controls not covered) that need to be either filled or accepted
- Overlaps in assurance, where efficiency gains can be made

The map could also be used to adjust the Internal Audit programme to review, where appropriate, assurance providers rather than controls – the start of the journey towards Integrated Assurance.

Our Assurance Map Continuum



8 Committee Assurance Statements

Throughout 2023/24 the SFRS will develop Committee Statements of Assurance in order to provide a means for our SFRS Board, through its Committees, to provide and demonstrate the constructive scrutiny and challenge aligned to their Terms of Reference responsibilities, thereby ensuring the effectiveness of governance and risk management arrangements across the Service.

This is a way for SFRS Non-Executive Committees to declare that they are assured around their areas of scrutiny across the Service, aligning with the responsibilities as set out within their respective Committee Terms of Reference (ToR) together with any legal/regulatory/H&S requirements and standards.

It gives a platform to highlight, where it is felt appropriate, any areas of good practice and/or to disclose any areas that need to improve.

This will help support the overarching SFRS Annual Governance Statement produced by the Accountable Officer (Chief Officer) that, as a Service, demonstrates there is sufficient evidence and self-assessment for both

Executive and Non-Executive members to receive the overall assurances they need.

The Statements are also a method of providing this assurance to wider stakeholders.

Committee statements will:

- Give an overview of the business of the Committee in the year
- Highlight areas of good practice and areas for improvement
- Provide its assessment on the adequacy of assurances received
- Identify areas of high interest or risk for the Committee in the coming year

The mechanism for assessing the adequacy of assurance will need to be defined. However, care needs to be taken not to make this overly prescriptive as Committees will always need to exercise a degree of judgement in reaching their assessment. Figure 1 below is illustrative of what a definition might look like.

Level of Assurance Assessment Rating	
Substantial	<p>Controls are robust and well managed Risk governance and control procedures are effective in supporting the delivery of any related objectives. Any exposure to potential weakness is low and the materiality of any consequent risk is negligible.</p>
Reasonable	<p>Controls are adequate but require improvement Some improvements are required to enhance the adequacy and effectiveness of procedures. There are weaknesses in the risk, governance and/or control procedures in place but not of a significant nature.</p>
Limited	<p>Controls are developing but weak There are weaknesses in the current risk, governance and/or control procedures that either do, or could, affect the delivery of any related objectives. Exposure to the weaknesses identified is moderate and being mitigated.</p>
Insufficient	<p>Controls are not acceptable and have notable weaknesses There are significant weaknesses in the current risk, governance and/or control procedures, to the extent that the delivery of objectives is at risk. Exposure to the weaknesses identified is sizeable and requires urgent mitigating action.</p>

Role of Chief Officer, Strategic Leadership Team, Heads of Functions and Local Senior Officers

The Chief Officer (CO) is the Board's principal adviser on the discharge of SFRS functions and is accountable to the Board. The CO provides operational leadership to the SFRS and ensures that the Board's aims and objectives are met and the SFRS's functions are delivered, and targets met through effective and properly controlled executive action. The CO's general responsibilities include the performance, management and staffing of SFRS.

The Strategic Leadership Team (SLT) which includes our CO, Deputy CO, Assistant CO's and Non-Uniformed Directors, are responsible for proposing objectives, priorities, outcomes and performance indicators for the organisation which square with the organisation's aims, policy and management objectives; making plans and ensuring that adequate systems are in place to achieve these objectives effectively, efficiently and economically; ensuring that adequate systems for internal control and risk management, both financial and otherwise, are in place and are monitored and reviewed regularly; monitoring and reporting of performance to the organisation's management board and/or Accountable Officer, and ensuring that functions are discharged with due regard to economy, efficiency and effectiveness within an overall framework of Best Value.

Heads of Function (Uniformed and Support) have the responsibility for the day-to-day management of the SFRS. The executive function is the custodian of the SFRS Strategy as approved by the SFRS Board and responsible for its execution.

Local Senior Officers (LSOs) at Area Commander level are appointed for each local authority area in Scotland (after consultation with the relevant local authority).

They are adequately equipped, supported, and empowered to fulfil their statutory duties and report to local Scrutiny Committee's on a regular basis.

In summary, the executive function provides the SFRS Board with sound information, advice and recommendations on the organisational structure, objectives, strategies, plans and policies of SFRS to enable the SFRS Board to make informed decisions and fulfil its role.



Role of the Board

The SFRS Board, including the Chair, consists of non-executives appointed by the Scottish Ministers. The Board provides strategic direction, support, and guidance to the SFRS, ensuring that it discharges its functions effectively and that Ministers' priorities are implemented. Board members are personally and corporately accountable for the Board's actions and decisions.

The Board scrutinises plans/proposals and holds the Chief Officer and SLT to account. The Board is free to establish its own Committee structure, delegating responsibilities as it considers fit.

The Board, under the leadership of the Chair, has corporate responsibility for:

- Producing Strategic and Annual Plans, prepared under sections 41A and 41B - 2005 Act (inserted by the 2012 Act), to be submitted to the Scottish Ministers for approval.
- Producing annual reports, prepared and published under section 41L - 2005 Act (inserted by the 2012 Act), and ensuring that they are laid before the Scottish Parliament in accordance with that section.
- Taking forward the aims and objectives as set out in the approved Strategic Plan.
- Determining steps needed to deal with wider changes which are likely to impact on the strategic aims/objectives of the SFRS, or on the attainability of its operational targets.
- The duty under section 39A of the 2005 Act (inserted by the 2012 Act) to make arrangements to secure Best Value i.e. continuous improvement in the carrying out of the SFRS's functions, where appropriate, participation in shared services.
- Ensuring that effective arrangements are in place to provide assurance on risk management, governance, and internal control, setting up an audit committee chaired by a non-executive member to provide independent advice and assurance on the effectiveness of the internal control and risk management systems.
- (In reaching decisions) taking into account relevant Scottish Minister guidance.
- For support staff, ensuring that an effective pay and conditions negotiating framework is in place which allows negotiations to complement the broad principles of the Scottish Government's Public Sector Pay Policy.
- Attend and participate in meetings of the National Joint Council for negotiation of operational staff pay, terms and conditions.
- Ensuring SFRS's proceedings, including those of its committees and sub-committees, are held in public and that the agendas, papers, and reports in relation to those proceedings are published, as well as publishing a statement setting out the circumstances in which proceedings may be held in private and in which documents need not be published, as required by schedule 1A - 2005 Act (inserted by 2012 Act).
- Appointing, with the approval of the Scottish Ministers, each subsequent SFRS Chief Officer and, in consultation with the SG, setting appropriate performance objectives and remuneration terms linked to these objectives, which give due weight to the proper management and use of resources within the stewardship of the SFRS and the delivery of outcomes.
- Acting consistently with principles of good governance, accountability, and transparency, as required by schedule 1A to the 2005 Act (inserted by the 2012 Act).
- Further detail can be found within the SFRS Governance and Accountability Framework and guidance on how the Board should discharge its duties is provided in appointment letters and in [On Board – A Guide for Members of Statutory Boards.](#)

11 Committees of the Board

Audit and Risk Assurance (ARAC)

Scrutinises the systems and processes for governance, internal control and risk management and provides assurances of their effectiveness to the Board and Accountable Officer.

Change (CC)

Provides oversight and direction on the development and achievement of the Change Programme and Benefits Realisation Plan.

People (PC)

Provides strategic advice and direction on matters affecting employees and ensures that staffing and remuneration arrangements support the strategic aims and objectives of the SFRS, reflecting best practice.

Remuneration, Appointments and Nominations (RANSC)

Sub-Committee of the People Committee with an overall purpose to advise on the remuneration and appointments strategy and supporting frameworks for the posts covered by the Sub-Committees remit.

Service Delivery (SD)

Scrutinises, monitors and reviews performance, and provide assurances to the Board relating to quality of Service Delivery nationally through operational efficiency and effectiveness, operational safety, and delivery of approved Service Delivery strategies.

Integrated Governance Forum (IGF)

Provide assurance to the SFRS Board that issues identified in specific governance Committees are discussed across the Board, thereby ensuring a joined-up approach to corporate governance.

12 Risk Management System

The aim of SFRS is to be risk managed, allowing innovation and aspiration, whilst actively managing risk through a range of measures to ensure key outcomes are met.

Establishing a consistent and effective framework, integrated within Governance and Assurance arrangements, will strengthen our control framework, and help further embed an effective risk culture within the Service.

The management of risk is fully embedded throughout the Service, forming an integral element of all Committees and Executive Boards. Engagement with the Board, Strategic Leadership Team and Directorates will ensure the framework is effectively used to inform

decision making, allowing the Service to present a fair and reasonable reflection of the most significant risks impacting upon its operations.

Reporting arrangements should also ensure that the sponsor unit is aware of relevant risks and how they are being managed. The SFRS Audit and Risk Assurance Committee will, at the earliest opportunity, notify the relevant Scottish Government Audit and Risk Committee if it considers that it has identified a significant problem which may have wider implications.

The Service recognises that it cannot entirely eliminate the risk of disruption and that a residual level of risk will always remain. However, the risk management framework has

been developed in order to minimise the probability and impact of a risk causing disruption and allow a discussion to be held on risk, which will raise awareness and ownership of the challenges presented to the Service.

Maturing the risk framework, allowing the Service to effectively consider and manage emerging risks will further strengthen our governance process.

SFRS recognises that risk, as well as presenting a threat, also presents opportunities for continuous improvement, developing new and innovative ways of working, enhancing the delivery of services to our Communities.

The SFRS shall ensure that the risks it faces are dealt with in an appropriate manner, in accordance with relevant aspects of generally recognised best practice in corporate governance, and have developed a risk management strategy, consistent with the Risk Management section of the SPFM. Reporting arrangements should ensure that the Sponsor Unit is made aware of relevant risks and how they are being managed.

In summary the SFRS risk management system includes the establishment of various policies, strategies, processes, procedures, and tools for identifying, measuring, monitoring, managing, and reporting of all material risks to which SFRS is exposed.

Risk Appetite

The purpose of the risk management framework is to encourage debate and discussion on risk and inform our decision-making processes in a manner that helps the organisation.

Risk Appetite is part of this overall framework and can be considered as the amount of risk that an organisation is prepared to accept, tolerate, or be exposed to at any point in time.

The benefits of adopting a formal approach to risk appetite include:

- Supporting informed decision making
- Reducing uncertainty
- Improving consistency across governance processes and decision making
- Supporting performance improvement
- Focusing discussion on priority areas
- Informing resource prioritisation



For SFRS, risk appetite will be based upon a number of underlying principles:

- It will be aligned to the risk maturity of the Service
- It will be aligned to our capacity and the resources available
- It will add value to and be supported by the risk management framework
- It will be measurable and meaningful to service users

The SFRS Board is responsible for the Risk Management Policy

The below table sets out the key roles and responsibilities

Roles	Responsibilities
The SFRS Board	The SFRS Board is responsible for ensuring effective arrangements are in place to provide assurance on risk management, governance and internal control. The Board will approve any amendments to the Risk Management Policy and will set the risk appetite for the Service.
Audit and Risk Assurance Committee (ARAC)	ARAC will advise the Board and Accountable Officer (Chief Officer) on the effectiveness of the application of the strategic processes for risk, control and governance. This will include a quarterly review of the Service's Strategic Risk Register and associated action plans.
SFRS Committee Structure	Individual Committees retain a scrutiny role, providing assurance to the Board on matters falling within their scope. All SFRS Committees will scrutinise risks pertinent to the business of the Committee through identified risk spotlights.
Chief Officer	The Chief Officer, as the Accountable Officer, is responsible for maintaining a sound system of internal control, risk management and corporate governance that supports the achievement of the SFRS policies, strategic aims and objectives. The Chief Officer will champion the importance of risk management in supporting the wider governance arrangements of the Service.
Strategic Leadership Team (SLT)	The identification and management of strategic risks will be the primary responsibility of the SLT. The SLT will undertake to monitor and review strategic risks regularly and take appropriate action to control risks. The SLT will champion the importance of risk management in supporting the achievement of the SFRS strategic aims and objectives and will ensure that adequate systems for internal control and risk management are in place.
Executive Boards	All Executive Boards will provide a monitoring and scrutiny role for risks falling within their scope and will provide assurance to SFRS Committees and the SLT that risk is being effectively managed. Executive Boards will champion the importance of managing risk as part of an integrated governance framework, ensuring that awareness and ownership of risk is embedded throughout the organisation.
Risk Owner	Each Directorate risk is owned by the relevant director with the responsible officer identified at a head of function level for ensuring that the register is fully populated and monitoring systems developed to update the information.
Internal Audit	Internal Audit will audit the effectiveness of the Service's risk management process as appropriate, provide assurance on the management of risk to the Board and help support the risk management process and coordination of risk reporting.

Anti-fraud and Corruption

SFRS is committed to the Scottish Government's zero tolerance approach to fraud. All SFRS staff are required at all times to act honestly and with integrity and to safeguard the public resources for which they are responsible.

SFRS will not accept any level of fraud or corruption and any cases of actual or suspected fraud will be thoroughly investigated and dealt with appropriately.

The Chief Officer, in accordance with the SFRS Financial Regulations, is responsible for identifying and managing the risk of fraud and corruption, for ensuring that appropriate risk management, internal control and governance arrangements are in place and for ensuring that Best Value is achieved.

The Chief Officer will notify Internal Audit and the Chair of the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee of any relevant matters that arise and will make arrangements to keep records of and prepare and forward to Scottish Government (SG) an annual report on Fraud and Theft suffered by the Service notifying SG at the earliest opportunity of any unusual or major incidents.

Overall responsibility for managing the risk of fraud has been delegated to the Acting Director of Finance and Procurement whose specific responsibilities incorporate this.

The SFRS Board is responsible for ensuring effective arrangements are in place to provide assurance on risk management, governance, and internal control. The Board will approve any amendments to the Anti-Fraud and Corruption Policy.

The principles of the SFRS Anti-Fraud and Corruption process are aligned to the SFRS Whistleblowing Policy.

This outlines the Service's commitment to the highest possible standards of openness and accountability and employees with serious concerns about illegality,

malpractice, wrongdoing, or serious failures in standards of work are encouraged to come forward and voice their concerns without fear of reprisal.

Both policies allow for the reporting of Fraud and the Acting Director of Finance and Procurement, and the Director of People and Organisational Development will determine the most applicable policy to be followed.

The overall purpose of ARAC is to provide independent assurance to the Board and Accountable Officer on the adequacy and effectiveness of the policies, procedures and systems relating to internal control, risk management and governance.

In relation to fraud, ARAC will scrutinise, challenge, and ensure continuous improvement on the appropriateness of the internal control environment, Anti-Fraud and Corruption policies and have corporate oversight for fraud and irregularities.

The Committee will be provided with the Annual Governance Statement which will provide information on any significant issues arising in the year and will receive quarterly fraud updates from the Acting Director of Finance and Procurement.

The annual reporting of any significant issues will be incorporated within the Annual Governance Statement and will be reported through this framework.

The purpose of the Good Governance Board (GGB) is to provide assurance to SFRS that appropriate systems of controls are in place and operating effectively, improving accountability and transparency in decision making and ensuring that key Service priorities are met.

The GGB will keep under review the organisation's whistleblowing, Anti-Fraud and Corruption policies including supporting reporting processes and the regular review of the Anti-Fraud and Corruption Policy.

Internal Audit will assist management by examining, evaluating, and reporting on controls to provide an independent assessment of the adequacy of the internal control system.

All SFRS employees and Board members will act in line with the relevant SFRS Code of Conduct and have a critical role to play in the prevention of fraud and corruption.

All SFRS Managers are directly responsible for the prevention and detection of fraud within their own areas.

Monitoring of fraud risk will be undertaken through the Executive Boards and Committees of the Service to ensure its effectiveness.

The governance framework ensures that the right level of assurance is used to inform decision making within an overall framework, clearly indicating the separation of scrutiny roles across the organisation.

Lessons learned through the risk assessment process, monitoring and reporting and effective scrutiny will be used to inform and develop the framework through policy review.

14 Financial

The SFRS presents its Annual Accounts for the year from 1 April to 31 March. The Accounts are prepared in a form directed by the Scottish Ministers in accordance with Section 42A (1) of the Fire (Scotland) Act 2005 (inserted by section 118 of the Police and Fire Reform (Scotland) Act 2012), and in accordance with the Government Financial Reporting Manual (FReM).

Under the Public Finance and Accountability (Scotland) Act 2000, auditors are appointed by the Auditor General.

From a financial perspective, our key measure of financial performance is the comparison of expenditure against the Departmental Expenditure Limit (DEL) funding provided by the Scottish Government. However SFRS will always endeavour to deliver the required outcomes while ensuring value for money.

Full details of our financial performance are found within our Annual Report and Accounts. The report provides a wealth of information on a vast array of activity across the Service.

The Chief Officer (Accountable Officer) has responsibility for maintaining a sound system of internal control, risk management and corporate governance that supports the achievement of the SFRS's policies, strategic aims, and objectives, whilst safeguarding the public funds and assets for which they are personally responsible, in accordance with the assigned responsibilities.

Performance

The Performance Management Framework (PMF) defines how we, the SFRS, manage our performance. It describes the processes we use and the tools available to support us in achieving the priorities set by the Scottish Ministers in the Fire and Rescue Framework for Scotland 2022 and the outcomes and objectives set out in our Strategic Plan.

Our approach to performance management recognises that success cannot be achieved by acting alone. We are committed to working with our partners and the communities that we serve to further improve our performance.

We are committed to working with our partners to develop measures which better indicate the level of effectiveness of our joint intervention and prevention activities.

This PMF therefore helps us to achieve our ambitions by ensuring that:

- We better understand what demands are driving our services
- We better understand how well we and our partnerships are performing now and where we need to improve further

- We have better information to guide decisions about what we need to do to keep improving
- Our people are better informed and empowered to achieve continuous improvement
- We are open and transparent in how we are performing.

We are committed to working with our partners to develop measures which better indicate the level of effectiveness of our joint intervention and prevention activities.

The SFRS have also developed and delivered a 3-year BI Strategy. This strategy will work in conjunction with the Digital Strategy in bringing about positive impacts and improvements throughout the Service.

It ensures that stakeholders including our staff, Scottish Government, planning partners and academic institutes are all involved in bringing about success.

Information Governance

Information Governance is the application of management techniques to collect information, communicate it within and outside the organisation and process it to enable personnel to make quicker and better decisions.

This should always be done securely and in compliance with legislation, something the SFRS promotes in everything we do. SFRS have approved a zero-risk appetite for non-compliance against our statutory duties.

The Information Governance Manager is the Data Protection Officer for the SFRS.



Independent Inspections and Internal/External Audit

SFRS is primarily inspected by His Majesty's Fire Service Inspectorate (HMFSI) and audited through independent internal and external auditors.

Each recommendation following any Inspection/Audit will have a management response and an appropriate action plan will be developed and reported to the relevant Committee for scrutiny purposes and in order to track progress against the recommendations.

The ARAC will also have complete oversight of all inspections and audits through a high-level dashboard.

The following gives some more context:

Internal audit

The SFRS shall:

- establish and maintain arrangements for internal audit in accordance with the Public Sector Internal Audit Standards and the Internal Audit section of the Scottish Public Finance Manual (SPFM)
- set up an audit committee of its board, in accordance with the Audit Committees section of the SPFM, to advise both the board and the Chief Officer in his/her capacity as the SFRS Accountable Officer
- forward timeously to the SG the audit charter, strategy, periodic audit plans and annual audit assurance report, including the SFRS Head of Internal Audit opinion on risk management, control and governance and other relevant reports as requested
- keep records of and prepare and forward timeously to the SG an annual report on fraud and theft suffered by the SFRS and notify the SG at the earliest opportunity of any unusual or major incidents.

The SG's Internal Audit Directorate has a right of access to all documents held by the SFRS internal auditor, including where the service is contracted out. The SG has a right of access to all SFRS records and personnel for any purpose.

External audit

The Auditor General for Scotland (AGS) audits, or appoints auditors to audit, the SFRS's annual accounts and passes them to the Scottish Ministers who shall lay them before the Scottish Parliament, together with the auditor's report and any report prepared by the AGS.

For the purpose of audit, the auditors have a statutory right of access to documents and information held by relevant persons. The SFRS shall instruct its auditors to send copies of all management reports (and correspondence relating to those reports) and responses to the SG.

The AGS, or examiners appointed by the AGS, may carry out examinations into the economy, efficiency, and effectiveness with which the SFRS has used its resources in discharging its functions.

The AGS may also carry out examinations into the arrangements made by the SFRS to secure Best Value. For the purpose of these examinations the examiners have a statutory right of access to documents and information held by relevant persons.





In addition, the SFRS shall provide, in contracts and any conditions to grants, for the AGS to exercise such access to documents held by contractors and sub-contractors and grant recipients as may be required for these examinations; and shall use its best endeavours to secure access for the AGS to any other documents required by the AGS which are held by other bodies.

Inspectors of the SFRS





His Majesty's Fire Service Chief Inspector and Assistant Inspectors will inspect the SFRS and, in doing so, may inquire into certain matters independently, or on the direction of Scottish Ministers.

The Chief Inspector is required to provide reports (or, where applicable, copy reports) of inquiries to the SFRS and, depending on the type of inquiry, to the Scottish Ministers. Copies of certain reports, in particular those relating to the state and efficiency of the SFRS, must be laid before the Scottish Parliament.

Primary

<p>Audit Scotland Are appointed to undertake Independent External Audit of SFRS.</p> 	<p>HMFSI Provides independent scrutiny of the Fire Service. Publish an annual scrutiny plan and conducts various different types of 'reviews' with a focus towards operational matters. Also alongside Audit Scotland has a Best Value inspection role.</p> 
<p>Local Authority Scrutiny Boards/Committees Each of Scotland's local authorities have scrutiny arrangements in place to allow them to influence the fire service at a local level.</p>  	

Secondary

 <p>Promotes and enforces Freedom of Information</p>	 <p>Gateway Reviews are a series of independently led assurance reviews, testing specific areas of projects, such as: scope, schedule, cost, risk, governance.</p>	 <p>UK government agency responsible for the encouragement, regulation and enforcement of workplace health, safety and welfare.</p>	 <p>Remit includes all matters within responsibility for Cabinet Secretary for Justice and Home Affairs.</p>	<p>External Accreditation</p>
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Code of Conduct

The Scottish Government, SFRS Board and SLT set and expect the highest standards of conduct to build and maintain the trust of our stakeholders, importantly colleagues and the communities we serve. Employees are actively encouraged to help shape our culture by speaking up and challenging behaviour that does not align with our values.

SFRS Employee Code of Conduct :

The SFRS Code of Conduct (Code) promotes standards of desired behaviours that apply to all employees. Our Code fosters an open and transparent environment where employees can speak up and raise concerns without any form of retaliation. It creates a frame of reference for properly addressing sensitive and complex issues and provides for accountability if standards of conduct are not upheld.

Code of Conduct for Board Members of the SFRS:

This Code specifically applies to members of the SFRS Board. It has been issued by the Scottish Ministers, with the approval of the Scottish Parliament, as required by the [*Ethical Standards in Public Life etc. \(Scotland\) Act 2000 \(the "Act"\)*](#). The purpose of the Code is to set out the conduct expected of those who serve on the boards of public bodies in Scotland.

Both our Employee and Board Member Code of Conduct's have been based on the nine key principles of public life, namely duty, selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability and stewardship, openness, honesty, leadership and respect.

Governance Strategy and Policy

The development of various other Strategies and Policies within SFRS are designed to support the implementation and operations of our Strategic Objectives.

They also exist with the intention of helping make clear what their aims are, explain how it will achieve them and contribute to the overall direction of SFRS in-line with the Fire and Rescue Framework and Governance and Accountability Framework agreed with Scottish Government.

In providing for good governance these documents are finalised after consultation with all impacted management and approved by the Board in line with the Scheme of Delegations.

The policy owners must ensure that any development of new policy and/or proposed changes to an existing policy are submitted through the relevant executive Group/Board where further consideration will be given to the relevant Committee of the Board. This needs to be presented for recommendation to the SFRS Board for approval if deemed Strategic in nature that would impact on the Service.

20 Governance of this Framework

Ownership of the framework is vested with the Governance, Strategy and Performance Function, through the Head of Governance, Strategy and Performance and the Board Support Manager.

21 Drafting, Amendments and Annual Review

SFRS Governance, Strategy and Performance function is responsible for the co-ordination, the drafting, any amendments, and the annual review of the framework.

Any proposed changes to the framework will be submitted to the executive Good Governance Board for scrutiny and then to the SLT and SFRS Board for approval.

22 Approval

The Framework must be approved by the SFRS Board and SLT.

23 Non-Compliance

Non-compliance with any SFRS policies, standards, procedures, or the like, could result in disciplinary action being considered.

24 Implementation

The Directors that make up part of the SLT are responsible for adherence to and the implementation of the Framework within their Directorates.

25 Compliments and Complaints

At the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service we are committed to continually improving the service we provide to our communities and recognise that to achieve this goal we must listen and respond to the views of the public.

Our Complaints, Comments and Compliments Policy is intended to ensure that our procedures in relation to complaints, comments and compliments are user focused, fair, proportionate, consistent, accessible, and easily understood. We will use the feedback we receive to monitor our performance and will incorporate this information into our planning and governance processes in order to continually improve our Service.

We are keen to hear examples of good practice, excellent service delivery; individual acts of bravery or heroism, or of the simple attention to detail which exemplifies the caring service we provide to Scotland's communities.

While we will always strive to do our best, we know that we will not always get it right. In instances where our standards of service are questioned, we welcome the opportunity to investigate the circumstances, are committed to correcting any lapses and to using the learning outcomes to improve our Service.

26 Legal

SFRS Legal Services provide advice to the Service on a wide range of topics, they are also supported by specialist external lawyers who assist with complex legal issues when required.

APPENDICES

List of key documents prescribed by this Governance Framework

- SFRS Long Term Vision
- Fire and Rescue Framework for Scotland
- SFRS Strategic Plan
- Governance and Accountability Framework
- Annual Governance Statement Policy
- Scheme of Delegation
- Standing Orders for meetings of the Board and its Committees and Sub-Committees
- Terms of Reference for each Committee of the Board
- Terms of Reference for Executive Boards and Groups
- Code of Conduct for Board Members of the SFRS
- Financial Regulations
- Standing Order Regulations Contracts



REFERENCES

1. Long Term Vision/Strategic Plan/Annual Operating Plan ; Local Plans
2. SFRS Performance Management Framework
3. SFRS Business Intelligence Strategy
4. What we spend and how we spend it
5. How are we performing - External Performance Assessments
6. SFRS Governance and Accountability Framework
7. How are we performing - Annual Reviews
8. SFRS Board and Committee Papers and Reports
9. Communication and Engagement Strategy
10. SFRS Values Framework
11. Code of Conduct for Board Members of the SFRS
12. Register of Interests
13. Mainstreaming and Equality Outcome Report
14. Anti-Fraud Statement, Whistleblowing Policy and Complaints Handling
15. Recruitment and Selection Policy
16. About SFRS - Standing Orders, Scheme of Delegation & Conflict of Interests
17. Schedule of Board and Committee Meetings
18. Island Community
19. Equality and Human Rights Impact Assessments – (Available on request)
20. Access to Information
21. Risk Management Policy
23. Annual Report and Statement of Accounts
24. Complaints, Comments and Compliments
25. SFRS Consultations



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FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE

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SFRS Good Governance Framework

Version 2.0 April 2023