

Self Assessment

Key elements of governance	Assessment	Comments
Developing codes of conduct which define standards of behaviour for members and staff, and policies dealing with whistleblowing and conflicts of interests and that these codes and policies are communicated effectively	Good	Set of values agreed by the Authority – STRIVE (Service, trust, respect, integrity, valued and empowered) Constitutional standing orders reviewed Member and employee codes of conduct Register of interests, and on-going declaration of these Register of gifts and hospitality Appropriately qualified Monitoring Officer to the Authority Anti-bribery and whistle-blowing policies in place Register of complaints and compliments Minimal number of complaints No substantiated complaints against the service
Ensuring compliance with relevant laws and regulations, internal policies and procedures, and that expenditure is lawful.	Good	All Committee and Authority reports contain section on financial implications. Legal implications are contained within the body of every report as appropriate. The Treasurer (Director of Corporate Services) and Monitoring Officer examine all reports to the Authority and its committees to enable legal and financial implications to be considered and provision included where appropriate.

Appendix A

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		The Monitoring Officer and Treasurer (Director of Corporate Services) attend Authority and Committee meetings to provide advice as required.
Documenting a commitment to openness and acting in the public interest, and compliance with the principles of Data Transparency	Good	Compliance with Transparency code Publication scheme on the website. Compliance with Freedom of Information (FOI) requirements Pay Policy Statement approved by the full Authority and published on the service website Annual Report Annual Assurance Statement Public meetings Publication of information on website, including Committee agenda and minutes Information Management Strategy updated
Establishing clear channels of communication with all sections of the community and other stakeholders, ensuring accountability and encouraging open consultation.	Good	Comprehensive communication and consultations strategies in place Positive evidence of proposals being amended following outcomes of consultation Annual report Key documents published on internet

Appendix A

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		Constructive dialogue with representative bodies Register of complaints and compliments, no substantiated complaints against the service Annual Assurance Statement available on the website The External Auditor's Annual Report did not identify any significant weaknesses in arrangements. Internal Audit provided substantial assurance regarding the adequacy of design and effectiveness in operation of the organisation's frameworks of governance, risk management and control. His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) published the outcome of the Service's latest full inspection on 14 August 2025. The inspection assessed the Service across 11 areas and concluded that it had achieved six 'Outstanding' and five 'Good' ratings, making it the only service in the country to receive a minimum rating of 'Good' in every inspection area. The report also included one Area for Improvement relating to Equality Impact Assessments, which is being progressed through established improvement and assurance arrangements.
Developing and communicating a vision which specifies intended outcomes for citizens and service users and is used as a basis for planning. Translating the vision into objectives for	Good	New Community Risk Management Plan agreed covering 2022-27 Annual Service Plan, setting out Vision, Activities, Priorities and Values. Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) identified for each of our priorities

Appendix A

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the authority and its partnerships		Suite of strategies and policies regularly reviewed. Consultation and Communication Strategy setting out how we will consult with public and service users Assessment of compliance with National Framework Effective Corporate Programme Board arrangements, split into 5 areas:- - Business Process Improvement Programme - Organisational Change and Improvement Programme - Fleet and Equipment Programme - Modern Ways of Working Programme - Capital Projects Programme. All major projects and reviews follow similar format and report to the Corporate Programme Board Terms of reference for all Programme Board items agreed at outset and delivery against these monitored on a quarterly basis
Reviewing the effectiveness of the decision-making framework, including delegation arrangements, decision making in partnerships, information provided to decision makers and robustness of data quality.	Good	Appropriate governance arrangements are in place, including the Combined Fire Authority and its committees, supported by Standing Orders, the Scheme of Delegation, Financial Regulations, Contract Standing Orders and associated governance documents. The Chief Fire Officer, Treasurer and Monitoring Officer each play a distinct role in supporting lawful and effective decision-making, with regular statutory

Appendix A

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		officer involvement in the governance process. During the year, further work has been undertaken to refresh aspects of the constitutional and policy framework to ensure it remains current, clear and aligned to good practice. Business continuity arrangements remain in place in respect of systems and information, including regular back-up and storage of data, supported by ICT disaster recovery arrangements.
Measuring the performance of services and related projects and ensuring that they are delivered in accordance with defined outcomes and that they represent the best use of resources and value for money.	Good	Comprehensive performance management information is presented regularly to the Service Management Team and Performance Committee. KPIs are agreed and monitored through established reporting arrangements, and the Authority publishes an Annual Service Report each year. Performance, productivity and improvement activity are increasingly supported by formal programme and change governance, including the Corporate Programme Board, and programme Boards. The Organisational Assurance Team, within Planning, Performance and Assurance, is now an established part of the Service's assurance framework and supports internal assurance activity, preparedness visits, HMICFRS liaison and the tracking of improvement actions. Comprehensive financial reporting arrangements are in place, supported by the Medium-Term Financial Plan and balanced budget. A Productivity and Efficiency Plan has been developed to provide a clearer line of sight between service improvement activity, savings, productivity measures and the use of resources, supporting oversight by members and strengthening the Authority's value for money arrangements. Service reviews and productivity activity continue to identify opportunities to improve value for

Appendix A

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		money and direct resources to priority areas.
Defining and documenting the roles and responsibilities of the executive, non-executive, scrutiny and officer functions, with clear delegation arrangements and protocols for effective communication in respect of the authority and partnership arrangements.	Good	Committee terms of reference are in place, supported by Standing Orders, the Scheme of Delegation and Financial Regulations. Member and officer roles are supported through the Member-Officer Protocol, job descriptions, member briefings and induction and training arrangements. The Authority recognises the importance of effective member oversight, informed scrutiny and independent assurance. During the year, opportunities have also been considered to strengthen the audit and governance elements of the constitutional framework, including committee remit, assurance reporting and scrutiny arrangements. Strategy Group meetings continue to provide members with an opportunity to discuss developments in a less formal setting, supported by regular briefings before committees and as required.
Ensuring the authority's financial management arrangements conform with the governance requirements of the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) Financial Management (FM) Code and the CIPFA Statement on the Role of the Chief financial Officer in Local Government and, where they do not, explain why and how they deliver the same impact.	Good	Self-assessment against the CIPFA FM Code undertaken and reported to Audit Committee. Self-assessment of the role of the Treasurer is compliant with the governance requirements set out in CIPFAs Statement on the Role of the Chief Financial Officer in Local Government. Qualified Treasurer, sits on the Executive Board and reports directly to Chief Fire Officer (CFO). Regular appraisal, with updated process implemented. Contract standing orders, financial regulations, budget holder instructions in place and regularly reviewed. Comprehensive budget setting and monitoring arrangement in place, linked to corporate objectives and priorities. Budget is delegated appropriately

Appendix A

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		and aligned with operational responsibility.
Ensuring effective arrangements are in place for the discharge of the monitoring officer function.	Good	The Monitoring Officer role is undertaken by an appropriately qualified and experienced officer and forms a key part of the Authority's governance framework. The Monitoring Officer is engaged in the review of reports, attendance at committees and the wider constitutional refresh, helping to ensure that governance arrangements remain lawful, current and effective. Regular liaison with the CFO and Treasurer supports timely advice and coordinated statutory officer oversight.
Ensuring effective arrangements are in place for the discharge of the head of paid service function.	Good	CFO is the head of paid service Regular appraisal with Chair.
Providing induction and identifying the development needs of members and senior officers in relation to their strategic roles, supported by appropriate training	Good	Member Training and Development Committee. All Members subject to a one to one to identify training and development needs. Specific Member training budget to address outcomes of this. Senior Officers subject to appraisal system, including identification of training and development needs.
Reviewing the effectiveness of the framework for identifying and managing risks and demonstrating clear accountability.	Good	Comprehensive Risk Management Strategy. Corporate Risk Register. Corporate Programme Board items include an assessment of risk. Strategic Business Continuity Plan (BCP) in place and tested on a regular

Appendix A

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		basis. Departmental Business Impact Assessments and Recovery Plans in place. Specific BCP training provided to Heads of Dept. Additional resilience built into ICT network. Appropriate insurance arrangements.
Ensuring effective counter-fraud and anti-corruption arrangements are developed and maintained.	Good	Anti-fraud policy. Up to date Fraud risk assessment in place. Full compliance with National Fraud Initiative.
Ensuring the assurance arrangements conform with the governance requirements of the CIPFA Statement on the Role of the Head of Internal Audit and, where they do not, explain why and how they deliver the same impact.	Good	Internal Audit is outsourced to Lancashire County Council. Internal Audit Charter in place. Internal Audit Service Quality Assurance and Improvement Programme process agreed. Lancashire County Council Internal Audit comply with CIPFA statement. Head of Internal Audit has direct access to Audit Committee, Treasurer, Clerk and Chief Fire Officer as well as Members of the Authority
Undertaking the core functions of an audit committee, as identified in CIPFA's Audit Committees: Practical Guidance for Local Authorities.	Good	An Audit Committee is established with agreed terms of reference covering the core functions of an audit committee. Members have access to both internal and external auditors and are provided with the opportunity to discuss issues without officers being present. During the year, the Authority has also considered opportunities to strengthen its audit and governance arrangements further, including committee remit, independent technical

Appendix A

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		support and the handling of risk, assurance and scrutiny matters through the wider constitutional review.
Ensuring that the authority provides timely support, information and responses to external auditors and properly considers audit findings and recommendations	Good	Audit Committee established. All core functions of an Audit Committee are covered by the existing terms of reference. Head of Internal Audit has direct access to Audit Committee, Treasurer, Monitoring Officer and Chief Fire Officer as well as Members of the Authority. Audit Committee have access to both Internal and external auditors, and are provided with an opportunity to discuss issues without Officers being present. External audit identified no significant weaknesses in arrangements but did highlight areas for improvement in relation to the timeliness and completeness of policy and governance document review and the clarity of member reporting on internal audit follow-up and recommendation tracking. These matters have been accepted and incorporated into the Authority's ongoing governance improvement programme.
Incorporating good governance arrangements in respect of partnerships and other joint working and ensuring that they are reflected across the authority's overall governance structures.	Good	Statement of Intent signed with Lancashire Constabulary and North West Ambulance Service (NWAS). Collaboration Group established, with regular reports to members.
Staff resources are adequate in numbers and skills to deliver the service objectives.	Good	Workforce Development Strategy agreed.

Appendix A

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The roles and responsibilities of staff and members have been clearly defined and are understood, and appropriate guidance and training are in place		Agreed establishment in line with approved budget. Agreed process for revising establishment. Job descriptions in place. Appropriate recruitment checks undertaken. Staff induction process in place, incorporating LearnPro module. Code of conduct in place and provided to all staff as part of induction. Appropriate performance management arrangements Appraisal system in place, including identification of training and development needs. Use of:- • Coaching and Mentoring • Leadership Conferences Operational Assurance Audit Team to review:- • operational preparedness • operational response • operational learning Regular staff surveys undertaken, the outcome of this was published and, where relevant, acted upon Regular and programmed station staff visits by the Executive Team to meet and receive feedback from all staff. ‘Star’ awards in place where staff nominate ‘star’ colleagues who live our values, and based on a judging panel awards are given to staff (and

Appendix A

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		publicised throughout the organisation). Updated Intranet incorporates social networking to connect staff across the service.
There are adequate contingency procedures to ensure that services can be resumed in case of emergency. Contingency procedures are well communicated	Good	Strategic BCP in place and tested on a regular basis. Departmental Business Impact Assessments and Recovery Plans in place. Specific BCP training provided to Heads of Department. BCP is considered as a standing item on SMT. BCP plan tested on a regular basis, and amended as required. Active member of Lancashire Resilience Forum. Appropriate BCP arrangements in place in respect of systems and information.
Processes have been established to ensure that corporate and local service policies and procedures are implemented effectively and are periodically reviewed	Good	A system of internal control is in place and policies and service orders are subject to review through established arrangements. During the year, further work has been progressed to refresh elements of the constitutional and policy framework in order to ensure that key governance documents remain current, complete and aligned to best practice. Internal and external assurance work has helped identify areas where policy review, assurance reporting and tracking of actions should be strengthened further, and these matters are being addressed through the Authority's governance improvement activity.