

**Sources Of Assurance:
Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service/Lancashire Combined Fire Authority 2022/23**

Key Elements of Governance	Assessment	Comments
<p>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 were communicated effectively.</p>	<p>Good</p>	<p>Set of values agreed by the Authority - STRIVE</p> <p>Constitutional standing orders reviewed</p> <p>Member and employee codes of conduct</p> <p>Register of interests, and on-going declaration of these</p> <p>Register of gifts and hospitality</p> <p>Appropriately qualified Clerk to the Authority</p> <p>Anti-bribery and whistle-blowing policies in place</p> <p>Register of complaints and compliments</p> <p>Complaints against Members considered as a standing CFA item</p> <p>Minimal number of complaints</p> <p>No substantiated complaints against the service</p>

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<p>Ensuring compliance with relevant laws and regulations, internal policies and procedures, and that expenditure was lawful.</p>	<p>Good</p>	<p>All Committee and Authority reports contain section on financial implications. Legal implications were contained within the body of every report as appropriate.</p> <p>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</p> <p>The Monitoring Officer and Treasurer/Director of Corporate Services attend Authority/Committee to provide advice as required</p>
<p>Documenting a commitment to openness and acting in the public interest, and compliance with the principles of Data Transparency.</p>	<p>Good</p>	<p>Compliance with Transparency code</p> <p>Publication scheme on the website</p> <p>Compliance with FOI requirements</p> <p>Pay Policy Statement approved by the full Authority and published on the service website</p> <p>Annual Report</p> <p>Annual Assurance Statement</p> <p>Public meetings</p> <p>Publication of information on website, including Committee agenda and minutes</p> <p>Information Management Strategy updated</p>

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<p>Establishing clear channels of communication with all sections of the community and other stakeholders, ensuring accountability and encouraging open consultation.</p>	<p>Good</p>	<p>Comprehensive communication and consultations strategies in place</p> <p>Positive evidence of proposals being amended following outcomes of consultation</p> <p>Annual report</p> <p>Key documents published on internet</p> <p>Constructive dialogue with representative bodies</p> <p>Register of complaints and compliments, no substantiated complaints against the service</p> <p>Annual Assurance Statement available on the website</p> <p>The External Auditors Annual Audit Letter did not identify any issues</p> <p>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</p> <p>Recommendations from audit reviews implemented</p> <p>HMICFRS Inspection rated the Service as Good in all categories, other than Outstanding in Culture. No major areas for improvement identified</p> <p>HMICFRS undertook a Covid-19 Thematic inspection which concluded that “the service adapted and responded to the pandemic effectively”</p>

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<p>Developing and communicating a vision which specified intended outcomes for citizens and service users and was used as a basis for planning.</p> <p>Translating the vision into objectives for the authority and its partnerships</p>	<p>Good</p>	<p>New Community Risk Management Plan agreed covering 2022/27</p> <p>Annual Service Plan, setting out Vision, Activities, Priorities and Values.</p> <p>KPIs identified for each of our priorities</p> <p>Suite of strategies/policies etc. regularly reviewed</p> <p>Consultation and Communication Strategy setting out how we would consult with public and service users</p> <p>Assessment of compliance with National Framework</p> <p>Effective Corporate Programme Board arrangements, split into 5 areas:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Business Process Improvement Programme - Service Delivery Change Programme - Capital Projects Programme. - People Strategy - Risk Management <p>All major projects and reviews follow similar format and report to the Corporate Programme Board</p>

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		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	<p>Appropriate governance arrangements in place, CFA plus 5 Committees.</p> <p>Committee terms of reference agreed, supported by Standing Orders, and Scheme of Delegation and Financial Regulations.</p> <p>Business Continuity Plan arrangements in place in respect of systems and information, including regular backing up and storage of data.</p> <p>ICT Disaster Recovery Plan in place</p>

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<p>Measuring the performance of services and related projects and ensuring that they were delivered in accordance with defined outcomes and that they represented the best use of resources and value for money.</p>	<p>Good</p>	<p>Comprehensive performance management information presented to SMT/Performance Committee on a regular basis. A replacement Performance Management System was required</p> <p>KPIs agreed with monitoring arrangements in place</p> <p>Annual Report</p> <p>HMICFRS Inspection regime</p> <p>Operational Assurance Audit Team to review:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • operational preparedness • operational response • operational learning <p>The quarterly publication - Safety Health and Environment and Operational Assurance Performance Summary identifies learning from incidents etc.</p> <p>External Audit review</p> <p>Comprehensive financial information reporting framework. An upgraded Finance System was implemented, this would further improve governance arrangements.</p> <p>Medium Term Financial Plan and balanced budget in place</p> <p>Service reviews identified to deliver savings</p> <p>Resources redirected into priority areas</p>

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		Consistently exceeded efficiency targets
<p>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.</p>	Good	<p>Committee terms of reference agreed, supported by Standing Orders, and Scheme of Delegation and Financial Regulations</p> <p>Strategy Group meetings inform members of developments in a less formal manner.</p> <p>Member/Officer protocol in place setting out respective roles and relationships etc.</p> <p>Member champions covering:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Equality, Diversity and Inclusion • Community Safety • Road Safety • Health and Wellbeing <p>Job descriptions for all staff</p> <p>Regular briefing sessions before Committees and as and when required</p> <p>Induction/training provided to all members</p>

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<p>Ensuring the authority's financial management arrangements conform with the governance requirements of CIPFAs 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.</p>	<p>Good</p>	<p>Self-assessment against the CIPFA FM Code undertaken and reported to Audit Committee.</p> <p>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</p> <p>Qualified Treasurer, sits on Exec Board and reports directly to Chief Fire Officer</p> <p>Regular appraisal, with updated process implemented.</p> <p>Contract standing orders, financial regulations, budget holder instructions in place and regularly reviewed</p> <p>Comprehensive budget setting/monitoring arrangement in place, linked to corporate objectives and priorities. Budget is delegated appropriately and aligned with operational responsibility</p>
<p>Ensuring effective arrangements were in place for the discharge of the monitoring officer function.</p>	<p>Good</p>	<p>Clerk to the Authority is the monitoring officer</p> <p>Appropriately qualified/experienced</p> <p>Regular appraisal</p> <p>Procedural standing orders reviewed</p> <p>Scheme of delegation updated and agreed by Audit Committee</p>

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Ensuring effective arrangements were in place for the discharge of the head of paid service function.	Good	CFO was the head of paid service Regular appraisal with Chairman
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 BCP (Business Continuity Plan) 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. HMICFRS undertook a Covid-19 Thematic inspection which concluded that “the service adapted and responded to the pandemic effectively” Additional resilience built into ICT network Appropriate insurance arrangements

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Ensuring effective counter-fraud and anti-corruption arrangements were developed and maintained.	Good	<p>Anti-fraud policy</p> <p>Up to date Fraud risk assessment in place</p> <p>Full compliance with National Fraud Initiative</p>
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	<p>Internal Audit is outsourced to Lancashire County Council</p> <p>Internal Audit Charter in place</p> <p>Internal Audit Service Quality Assurance and Improvement Programme process agreed</p> <p>Lancashire County Council Internal Audit comply with CIPFA statement</p> <p>Head of Internal Audit has direct access to Audit Committee, Treasurer, Clerk and Chief Fire Officer as well as Members of the Authority</p>
Undertaking the core functions of an audit committee, as identified in CIPFA's Audit Committees: Practical Guidance for Local Authorities.	Good	<p>Audit Committee established and terms of reference agreed, covering core functions of an Audit Committee</p> <p>Audit Committee had access to both Internal and external auditors, and were provided with an opportunity to discuss issues without Officers being present</p>

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<p>Ensuring that the authority provided timely support, information and responses to external auditors and properly considered audit findings and recommendations</p>	<p>Good</p>	<p>Audit Committee established</p> <p>All core functions of an Audit Committee were covered by the existing terms of reference</p> <p>Head of Internal Audit had direct access to Audit Committee, Treasurer, Clerk and Chief Fire Officer as well as Members of the Authority</p> <p>Audit Committee had access to both Internal and external auditors, and were provided with an opportunity to discuss issues without Officers being present</p> <p>No significant issues identified by either Internal or External Auditor</p>
<p>Incorporating good governance arrangements in respect of partnerships and other joint working and ensuring that they were reflected across the authority's overall governance structures.</p>	<p>Good</p>	<p>Statement of Intent signed with Lancashire Constabulary and NWAS</p> <p>Collaboration Group established, with regular reports to members</p>

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<p>Staff resources were adequate in numbers and skills to deliver the service objectives. The roles and responsibilities of staff and members had been clearly defined and were understood, and appropriate guidance and training was in place.</p>	<p>Good</p>	<p>Workforce Development Strategy agreed</p> <p>Agreed establishment in line with approved budget. Agreed process for revising establishment.</p> <p>Job descriptions in place</p> <p>Appropriate recruitment checks undertaken</p> <p>Staff induction process in place, incorporating LearnPro module</p> <p>Code of conduct in place and provided to all staff as part of induction.</p> <p>Appropriate performance management arrangements Appraisal system in place, including identification of training and development needs</p> <p>Use of:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coaching and Mentoring • Leadership Conferences <p>Operational Assurance Audit Team to review:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • operational preparedness • operational response • operational learning <p>Regular staff surveys undertaken, the outcome of this was published and, where relevant, acted upon</p>

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		<p>Regular and programmed station staff visits by the Executive Team to meet and receive feedback from all staff</p> <p>‘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 publicised throughout the organisation).</p> <p>Updated Intranet incorporates social networking to connect staff across the service</p>

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<p>There were adequate contingency procedures to ensure that services could be resumed in case of emergency.</p> <p>Contingency procedures were well communicated</p>	<p>Good</p>	<p>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 Dept</p> <p>BCP was considered as a standing item on SMT</p> <p>BCP plan tested on a regular basis, and amended as required</p> <p>Active member of Lancashire Resilience Forum</p> <p>Appropriate BCP arrangements in place in respect of systems and information, HMICFRS undertook a Covid-19 Thematic inspection which concluded that “the service adapted and responded to the pandemic effectively..... In line with good governance, the service had business continuity plans in place. The service relied on the county LRF pandemic flu plan as it didn’t have its own. These plans were activated.”</p>
<p>Processes had been established to ensure that corporate and local service policies and procedures were implemented effectively and were periodically reviewed</p>	<p>Good</p>	<p>System of internal control established</p> <p>Policies and service orders were regularly reviewed, in line with an agreed timetable</p> <p>Internal audit reviews had not identified any significant weaknesses</p> <p>External audit reviews had not identified any significant weaknesses</p>