

## Code of Corporate Governance

### Executive Summary

In 2004, the Independent Commission on Good Governance in Public Services published a set of common principles that it wanted all Public Sector Organisations to adopt. The commission set up by CIPFA (Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy) in conjunction with the Office for Public Management said there should be a common governance standard for Public Services similar to the private sectors combined Code.

This document outlines the Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Authority's Code of Corporate Governance and provides examples of assurance and evidence in support of the Authority's Annual Governance Statement. The Code is based on the latest CIPFA/SOLACE guidance 'Delivering Good Governance in Local Government: Framework'.

### Contents:

	<b>Page</b>
1. Statement of Assurance – Corporate Governance	2
2. Code of Corporate Governance	3
3. Examples of Assurance and Evidence in Support of the Authority's Annual Governance Statement	4

Updated May 2009

## Code of Corporate Governance

### 1. Statement of Assurance – Corporate Governance

Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Authority is responsible for ensuring that its business is conducted in accordance with the law and proper standards and that public money is safeguarded and properly accounted for and used economically, efficiently and effectively. In discharging this accountability, Members and senior officers are responsible for putting in place proper arrangements for the governance of the Authority's affairs and the stewardship of the resources at its disposal.

To this end, the Authority has approved and adopted a Code of Corporate Governance, which is consistent with the principles of and reflects the requirements of CIPFA (Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy) and SOLACE (Society of Local Authority Chief Executives) framework "Corporate Governance in Local Government: a Keystone for Community Governance". A copy of the Authority's Code is available on the Service's website ([www.hwfire.org.uk](http://www.hwfire.org.uk)) or can be obtained on request from Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Service Headquarters, 2 Kings Court, Charles Hastings Way, Worcester WR5 1JR.

During the year 2009-10, the Authority has reviewed and consolidated appropriate management and reporting arrangements to enable it to satisfy itself that its approach to Corporate Governance is both adequate and effective in practice.

The Authority is seeking to continually improve the effectiveness of its arrangements for the governance of the Authority's affairs. We will review continued compliance with the Code as part of our next annual review.

**[Signed:]**

**[Signed:]**

Brigadier Jones *cbe*  
Chair

P Hayden  
Chief Fire Officer/Chief Executive

Date:



Paul Hayden

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## 2. Code of Corporate Governance

Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Authority's Code of Corporate Governance closely follows guidance published jointly by CIPFA/SOLACE and endorsed by the Local Government Association and the Audit Commission. It has been developed in response to the recommendation that Local Authorities draw up their own 'Code of Corporate Governance', a document that describes the system by which an Authority directs and controls its functions and relates to its communities. The Annual Governance Statement reflects the guidance of the Code and links directly into the Service Performance Plan.

Three key principles underpin Corporate Governance:

### 2.1 Openness and Inclusivity

Openness is required to ensure that stakeholders can have confidence in the decision-making and management processes of Local Authorities and in the approach of the individuals within them. Openness also requires an inclusive approach, which seeks to ensure that all stakeholders and potential stakeholders have the opportunity to engage effectively with the decision-making processes and actions of Local Authorities.

### 2.2 Integrity

Integrity comprises both straightforward dealing and completeness. It is based upon honesty, selflessness, objectivity and high standards of propriety and probity in the stewardship of public funds and management of an Authority's affairs. It is dependent on the effectiveness of the control framework and on the personal standards and professionalism of the Members and staff within the Authority.

### 2.3 Accountability

Accountability is the process whereby Local Authorities and the Members and staff within them are responsible for their decisions and actions, including their stewardship of public funds and all aspects of performance and submit themselves to appropriate external scrutiny.

The CIPFA/SOLACE guidance identifies six core principles, which should be covered in a Code:

1. Focusing on the purpose of the Authority and on outcomes for the community and creating and implementing a vision for the local area
2. Members and Officers working together to achieve a common purpose with clearly defined functions and roles
3. Promoting values for the Authority and demonstrating the values of good governance through upholding high standards of conduct and behaviour
4. Taking informed and transparent decisions which are subject to effective scrutiny and managing risk
5. Developing the capacity and capability of members and officers to be effective
6. Engaging with local people and other stakeholders to ensure robust public accountability

This Code takes each of these principles in turn and sets out the ways in which the principles of Corporate Governance should be reflected in each. It identifies the measures, which are already in place within the Authority to comply with the requirements set out in the guidance and how we demonstrate compliance.

The statement of assurance which fronts this document is incorporated within the Authority's Service Plan.



The principles of good governance that we have adopted are:-	What we will do to meet them	How we will demonstrate compliance
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure that partnerships are underpinned by a common vision of their work and that it is understood and agreed by all partners;</li> <li>• Publish an annual report on a timely basis to communicate the Authority's activities and achievements, its financial position and performance;</li> <li>• Decide how the quality of service to users is to be measured and make sure that the information needed to review service quality effectively and regularly is available;</li> <li>• Put in place effective arrangements to identify and deal with failure in service delivery;</li> <li>• Decide how value for money is to be measured and make sure that the Authority or partnership has the information needed to review value for money and performance effectively. Measure the environmental impact of policies, plans and decisions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The FRA is signed up to formal governance arrangements in its key strategic partnerships based on local community priorities.</li> <li>• The FRA publishes a Service Plan once agreed on a timely basis to communicate the authority's activities and achievements, its financial position and performance.</li> <li>• The FRA measures the quality of the service it provides directly, or in partnership, or by commissioning. This information can be accessed via the inter and intra nets, as well as hard copy information packs.</li> <li>• The FRA has effective arrangements in place to identify and deal with failure in service delivery identified through robust monitoring procedures.</li> <li>• The FRA has put in place arrangements to ensure that it makes best use of its resources and that tax payers and service users receive excellent value for money, by adopting national standards to contract for goods and services supported by robust procurement procedures. In addition, the Service has adopted an Environmental Policy.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• FRA actively participates in strategic partnerships</li> <li>• Service Plan, as approved by the FRA</li> <li>• Statement of Accounts, as approved by Audit Committee</li> <li>• PMM Quarterly Performance Meetings</li> <li>• Best Value, Policy &amp; Performance Committee</li> <li>• Audit Committee</li> <li>• FRA</li> <li>• PMM Quarterly Performance Meetings</li> <li>• Best Value Policy &amp; Performance Committee</li> <li>• Audit Committee</li> <li>• FRA</li> <li>• Quarterly review by BVPP Committee of corporate aims and objectives, including measurement against Performance Indicators</li> <li>• Internal Audit confirms compliance with national standards and procurement procedures.</li> <li>• Financial reporting with regards to Value for Money</li> </ul>

The principles of good governance that we have adopted are:-	What we will do to meet them	How we will demonstrate compliance
<p><b>To work to achieve the stated objectives of Members and Officers to achieve a common purpose with clearly defined functions and roles:</b> By:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Setting out a clear statement of the respective roles and responsibilities of the Executive and the Executive’s Members individually and the Authority’s approach towards putting this into practice;</li> <li>• Set out a clear statement of the respective roles and responsibilities of the other Authority Members, Members generally and senior officers</li> <li>• Determine a scheme of delegation and reserve powers within the constitution, including a formal schedule of those matters specifically reserved for collective decision of the Authority, taking account of relevant legislation, and ensure that it is monitored and updated when required;</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The FRA ensures effective leadership throughout the Authority through the committee structure and is clear about Executive and Non-Executive functions</li> <li>• The FRA ensures that a constructive working relationship exists between Authority Members and officers and that the responsibilities of Authority Members and officers are carried out to a high standard. An effective structure exists for both cadres with clearly defined responsibilities</li> <li>• The FRA has produced a scheme of delegation and reserve powers within the constitution, including a formal schedule of those matters specifically reserved for collective decision of the Authority, taking account of relevant legislation, and ensure that it is monitored and updated when required.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Through its scheme of delegation the FRA regularly reviews member and senior officer roles and responsibilities to ensure they are coherent, comprehensive and continue to focus on delivering the purpose and priorities of the organisation. There is a Scheme of Delegation to Officers in place and an effective rank to role procedure has been adopted.</li> <li>• Organisational Chart</li> <li>• Protocol for Member /Officer Relations</li> <li>• ‘Job roles’ for Members, Chairs. Vice-Chairs, Member Champions</li> <li>• Senior Officer job descriptions</li> <li>• Scheme of Delegation which is regularly reviewed by the Clerk</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Make a Chief Executive or equivalent responsible and accountable to the authority for all aspects of operational management;</li> <li>• Develop protocols to ensure that the Leader and Chief Executive (or equivalent) negotiate their respective roles early in the relationship and that a shared understanding of roles and objectives is maintained;</li> <li>• Make a senior officer (the S151 officer) responsible to the Authority for ensuring that appropriate advice is given on all financial matters, for keeping proper financial records and accounts, and for maintaining an effective system of internal control;</li> <li>• Make a senior officer (usually the Monitoring Officer) responsible to the Authority for ensuring that agreed procedures are followed and that all applicable statutes and regulations are complied with;</li> <li>• Develop protocols to ensure effective communication between members and officers in their respective roles;</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The FRA has appointed a Chief Executive / Chief Fire Officer who is responsible and accountable to the Authority for all aspects of operational management.</li> <li>• The FRA has adopted a set of protocols to ensure that the Leader and Chief Executive / Chief Fire Officer negotiate their respective roles early in the relationship and that a shared understanding of roles and objectives is maintained;</li> <li>• The FRA has appointed a senior officer responsible to the Authority for ensuring that appropriate advice is given on all financial matters, for keeping proper financial records and accounts, and for maintaining an effective system of internal control;</li> <li>• The FRA has appointed a senior officer responsible to the Authority for ensuring that agreed procedures are followed and that all applicable statutes and regulations are complied with;</li> <li>• The FRA has developed protocols to ensure that relationships between the Authority and officers are clear so that each knows what to expect from the other.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Organisational Chart</li> <li>• Scheme of Delegation to Officers sets out the functions delegated to the Chief Fire Officer (Chief Executive)</li> <li>• Scheme of Delegation</li> <li>• Protocol for member/officer relations</li> <li>• 'Job role' set out for Chair</li> <li>• CFO job description</li> <li>• This responsibility is performed by the Treasurer of the FRA.</li> <li>• Scheme of Delegation and Financial Regulations set out the responsibilities of the Treasurer (S151 Officer)</li> <li>• This responsibility is performed by the Clerk to the FRA.</li> <li>• Functions of the Monitoring Officer approved by the FRA</li> <li>• Group Leaders meetings</li> <li>• Protocol for member/officer relations</li> </ul>
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The principles of good governance that we have adopted are:-	What we will do to meet them	How we will demonstrate compliance
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Set out terms and conditions for remuneration of members and officers and an effective structure for managing the process, including an effective remuneration panel (if applicable);</li>   <li>• Ensure that effective mechanisms exist to monitor service delivery;</li>   <li>• Ensure that the organisation’s vision, strategic plans, priorities and targets are developed through robust mechanisms and in consultation with the local community and other key stakeholders, and that they are clearly articulated and disseminated;</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The FRA has an agreed members’ allowance procedure whereby remunerative scales are adopted. Officers relate to national schemes of pay and conditions.</li>   <li>• The FRA has robust systems to measure the quality of the service it provides directly, or in partnership, or by commissioning. This information can be accessed via the inter and intra nets, as well as hard copy information packs.</li>   <li>• Through the dovetailing of plans setting targets and priorities opportunity is availed for consultation by all stakeholders once they are fully aware of the agenda in question.</li>   <li>• The FRA ensures that it agrees to the terms and conditions of the constitution of strategic partnerships in order for compatibility to proceed.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Members’ Allowances Scheme reviewed regularly by FRA.</li> <li>• Members’ Allowances Scheme referred to Independent Remuneration Panels of Constituent bodies for their consideration, prior to review by FRA.</li> <li>• Members’ payments published on the Service website and annually in the press</li>   <li>• Quarterly Performance Meetings</li> <li>• Quarterly review by BVPP Committee of corporate aims and objectives, including measurement against Performance Indicators.</li> <li>• BVPP Committee papers published on the Service website</li> <li>• Participate in external peer assessments such are (Operational Assessment and CharterMark) to assess current performance and achievements and capacity to deliver future improvements.</li>   <li>• Extensive public consultation every year, including all stakeholders, on the Service’s draft Annual Action Plan.</li> <li>• Approval by the Authority, each December, of the annual Action Plan, following consultation.</li> </ul>

The principles of good governance that we have adopted are:-	What we will do to meet them	How we will demonstrate compliance
<p>When working in Partnership:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure that members are clear about their roles and responsibilities both individually and collectively in relation to the partnership and to the Authority;</li> <li>• Ensure that there is clarity about the legal status of the partnership;</li> <li>• Ensure that representatives or organisations both understand and make clear to all other partners the extent of their authority to bind their organisation to partner decisions.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In April 2009, Section 138 of the Local Government Act was updated to include 'Duty to Involve'. The new 'Duty to Involve' seeks to ensure that local people have greater opportunity to have their say.</li> <li>• The FRA engages with partners for collaborative consultation via the Total Place Survey and through its own consultation procedures.</li> <li>• Definitively CDRPs are legal bodies unlike Strategic Partnership; both are subject to scrutiny via the Local Authorities.</li> <li>• The FRA ensures appropriate level of representation at partnership meetings.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Members represent the Authority at Strategic partnership level.</li> <li>• DCFO represents the FRA at the Worcestershire Partnership</li> <li>• Clear understanding of role and contribution to the partnership.</li> <li>• FRA will make appropriate arrangements for the Chair, DCFO and Group Managers to attend partnership meetings.</li> <li>• This is led and co-ordinated through the Policy, Planning &amp; Performance dept.</li> </ul>

The principles of good governance that we have adopted are:-	What we will do to meet them	How we will demonstrate compliance
<p><b>To promote values for the Authority and demonstrate the values of good governance through upholding high standards of conduct and behaviour:</b> By:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensuring that the Authority’s leadership sets a tone for the organisation by creating a climate of openness, support and respect;</li>   <li>• Ensure that standards of conduct and personal behaviour expected of Members and staff, of work between Members and staff and between the Authority, its partners and the community are defined and communicated through codes of conduct and protocols;</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The FRA ensures that Authority members and officers exercise leadership by behaving in ways that exemplify high standards of conduct and effective governance. There are written directives on roles and procedures to be adopted in the performance of their duties.</li>   <li>• The FRA ensures by written reference that the standards of conduct and personal behaviour expected of Members and staff are easily available to be read, digested and followed.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Authority applies Codes of Conduct for both Members and employees.</li> <li>• The Authority has appointed a Standards Committee, with independent, non-elected members, to investigate allegations of breaches of the Code of Conduct by members.</li> <li>• The Authority operates a “Confidential Reporting (Whistle-blowing)” policy that is reviewed annually.</li> <li>• Ethical Framework</li>   <li>• The Authority applies Codes of Conduct for both Members and employees.</li> <li>• The Authority has appointed a Standards Committee, with independent, non-elected members, to investigate allegations of breaches of the Code of Conduct by Members.</li> <li>• The Authority operates a “Confidential Reporting (Whistle-blowing)” policy.</li> <li>• Scheme of delegation.</li> <li>• Protocol for member/officer relations.</li> <li>• The Authority participates in the National Fraud Initiative.</li> <li>• Ethical Framework</li> </ul>

The principles of good governance that we have adopted are:-	What we will do to meet them	How we will demonstrate compliance
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Put in place arrangements to ensure that Members and employees of the Authority are not influenced by prejudice, bias or conflicts of interest in dealing with different stakeholders and put in place appropriate processes to ensure that they continue to operate in practice</li>   <li>• Develop and maintain shared values including leadership values for both the organisation and staff reflecting public expectations and communicate these with Members, staff, the community and partners;</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The FRA adopts and reviews policy and protocols to ensure that Members and employees carry out their respective functions in a fair, equitable, non-discriminatory and inclusive manner.</li>   <li>• The FRA has put into place effective organisational values.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Authority applies Codes of Conduct for both Members and employees.</li> <li>• The Authority has appointed a Standards Committee, with independent, non-elected members, to investigate allegations of breaches of the Code of Conduct by members.</li> <li>• The Authority implements its own Equality scheme “Equality for All” throughout the Service, externally accredited at Equality Standard Level 3.</li> <li>• The Authority appoints an Equality and Diversity Champion to promote and pursue these aims.</li> <li>• The Authority employs a designated Equality and Diversity Officer.</li> <li>• The Authority provides training for Members in Standards &amp; Ethics and Equality &amp; Diversity.</li>   <li>• The Authority’s mission statement is emphasised on all Authority stationery, publications and on the Service website.</li> <li>• Cultural development</li> <li>• Ethical Framework development and training</li> </ul>

The principles of good governance that we have adopted are:-	What we will do to meet them	How we will demonstrate compliance
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Put in place arrangements to ensure that systems and processes are designed in conformity with appropriate ethical standards, and monitor their continuing effectiveness in practice;</li> <li>• Develop and maintain an effective Standards Committee;</li> <li>• Use the organisation’s shared values to act as a guide for decision making and as a basis for developing positive and trusting relationships within the Authority;</li> <li>• In pursuing the vision of a partnership, agree a set of values against which decision making and actions can be judged. Such values must be demonstrated by partners’ behaviour both individually and collectively.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The FRA has adopted an Equality &amp; Diversity Scheme which conforms to national standards, and has put in place performance indicators to continually monitor effectiveness in practice.</li> <li>• The FRA has appointed a Standards Committee, in accordance with the guidelines set by the Standards Board for England.</li> <li>• The FRA has put into place effective organisational values, which are publicised in the Authority’s mission statement and in the corporate aims and objectives.</li> <li>• Through its membership of key strategic partnerships the FRA upholds its commitment to sharing common values, including sharing collective responsibility with its partners, and individual responsibility for its own actions.</li> <li>• The Authority demonstrates a strong ethical framework and culture shown by the formal adoption of the Model Code of Conduct for Members and the Ethical Framework in place for all employees of the FRA</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Authority’s performance against its own Equality &amp; Diversity Performance Indicators is reviewed on a quarterly basis by the BVPP Committee.</li> <li>• Ethical Framework in place</li> <li>• The Standards Committee’s composition, proceedings and procedures are all available to the public on the Service website.</li> <li>• The Committee reports annually to the FRA.</li> <li>• The Authority is involved in Joint Training with the constituent authorities for Standards Committee Members.</li> <li>• The BVPP Committee reviews the performance of the Authority in achieving the corporate aims and goals on a quarterly basis.</li> <li>• FRA actions in support of the strategic partnerships are open to peer and public scrutiny through the partnership’s performance management framework and public reporting mechanisms.</li> </ul>

The principles of good governance that we have adopted are:-	What we will do to meet them	How we will demonstrate compliance
<p><b>Taking informed and transparent decisions which are subject to effective scrutiny and managing risk:</b></p> <p>By:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Developing and maintaining an effective scrutiny function which encourages constructive challenge and enhances the Authority's performance overall and that of any organisation for which it is responsible;</li>   <li>• Develop and maintain open and effective mechanisms for documenting evidence for decisions and recording the criteria, rationale and considerations on which decisions are based;</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The FRA is rigorous and transparent about how decisions are taken and listens and acts upon the outcome of constructive scrutiny.</li>   <li>• The FRA has effective mechanisms for documenting evidence for decisions and recording the criteria, rationale and considerations on which decisions are based;</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The proceedings of all meetings of the Authority, and of all Committees of the Authority are publicised in advance, and reported on fully on the Service Website.</li> <li>• The Authority has appointed an Audit Committee, and a BVPP Committee which maintain effective scrutiny of the Authority's performance.</li> <li>• The Authority encourages public scrutiny through consultation, complaints procedures and input into FRA Agenda via Public Questions. Guidance to asking questions at FRA meetings is published on the website</li>   <li>• All Agendas and non-exempt papers, reports and minutes of meetings of the FRA are available on the service website.</li> <li>• Business Impact Assessments are completed for papers and reports which recommend changes in policies or procedures.</li> </ul>

The principles of good governance that we have adopted are:-	What we will do to meet them	How we will demonstrate compliance
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Put in place arrangements to safeguard Members and employees against conflicts of interest and put in place appropriate processes to ensure that they continue to operate in practice;</li>   <li>• Develop and maintain an effective Audit Committee (or equivalent) which is independent of the executive and scrutiny functions or make other appropriate arrangements for the discharge of the functions of such a committee.</li>   <li>• Ensure that effective, transparent and accessible arrangements are in place for dealing with complaints.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The FRA has put in place arrangements to safeguard Members and employees against conflicts of interest and put in place appropriate processes to ensure that they continue to operate in practice;</li>   <li>• The FRA has an effective Audit Committee (or equivalent) which is independent of the executive and scrutiny functions.</li>   <li>• The Authority has put in place arrangements for dealing with complaints from the public on the Service website, and from its own employees.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Authority applies Codes of Conduct for both Members and employees.</li> <li>• The Authority has appointed a Standards Committee, with independent, non-elected members, to investigate allegations of breaches of the Code of Conduct by members.</li> <li>• Member Induction on Code of Conduct and further training on Standards &amp; Ethics</li> <li>• The Authority maintains Registers of Interests for Members</li> <li>• The Authority has clearly stated policies for both Members and employees regarding Gifts and Hospitality to prevent possible conflicts of Interest.</li> <li>• Clerk advises Members on potential for conflict of interests</li>   <li>• The Authority has appointed an Audit Committee, which works closely with the Audit Commission and the internal auditors.</li> <li>• PMM monitor monthly</li>   <li>• The Authority reports on complaints from the public to every FRA meeting.</li> <li>• The Authority has put in place the Confidential Reporting Policy and the Listening Ear facility for employees.</li> <li>• The procedure for reporting alleged breaches of the Code of Conduct by Members is published on the Service website</li> </ul>

The principles of good governance that we have adopted are:-	What we will do to meet them	How we will demonstrate compliance
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure that those making decisions whether for the Authority or the partnership are provided with information that is fit for the purpose – relevant, timely and gives clear explanations of technical issues and their implications.</li>   <li>• Ensure that professional advice on matters that have legal or financial implications is available and recorded well in advance of decision making and used appropriately.</li>   <li>• Ensure that risk management is embedded into the culture of the Authority; with Members and managers at all levels recognising that risk management is part of their jobs.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The FRA ensures that good quality information; advice and support are available to ensure that services are delivered effectively and are what the community wants/needs.</li>   <li>• The Authority has arrangements in place to ensure proper legal and financial advice</li>   <li>• The FRA has an effective risk management system that is embedded into the culture of the Authority; with Members and managers at all levels recognising that risk management is part of their jobs.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prior to presentation at main meetings of the Authority or Committees, all information presented is considered and reviewed by Committee Services and at briefings of Officers and Chairpersons.</li> <li>• All information is publicised at least 5 clear days before the Meeting, in accordance with legislative requirements and Standing Orders.</li> <li>• The Authority maintains a Glossary of Terms which is circulated with all Meeting agendas.</li>   <li>• The Authority has Service Level Agreements for the provision of Legal and Financial advice.</li> <li>• Business Impact Assessments, which identify legal and financial implications, are completed for papers and reports which recommend changes in policies or procedures.</li>   <li>• The Authority has a Strategic Risk Register, which is updated as required and in addition reviewed on an Annual Basis.</li> <li>• A Corporate Risk report is presented each quarter to the Audit Committee.</li> <li>• Member Risk Champion</li> </ul>

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure that arrangements are in place for whistle-blowing to which staff and all those contracting with the Authority have access.</li>   <li>• Actively recognise the limits of lawful activity placed on them by, for example, the ultra vires doctrine but also strive to utilise powers to the full benefit of their communities.</li>   <li>• Recognise the limits of lawful action and observe both the specific requirements of legislation and the general responsibilities placed on local authorities by public law.</li>   <li>• Observe all specific legislative requirements placed upon them, as well as the requirements of general law, and in particular to integrate the key principles of good administrative law – rationality, legality and natural justice – into their procedures and decision-making processes.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The FRA has arrangements in place for whistle-blowing to which staff and all those contracting with the Authority have access.</li>   <li>• The FRA uses its legal powers to the full benefit of the citizens and communities of Herefordshire and Worcestershire.</li>   <li>• The impetus and limitations of statutory instruments are respected and adhered to by the appropriate actions of the FRA in carrying out its duties.</li>   <li>• The FRA inducts its Members and officers in the observance of the legal aspects of performing their roles and responsibilities through appropriate training for the areas of work they undertake.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Audit Committee reviews the Whistle-blowing policy annually.</li> <li>• The policy is brought to the attention of all service personnel through the Service Bulletin on a regular basis.</li> <li>• The policy is brought to the attention of all contractors engaged by the Service.</li>   <li>• The Authority has adopted a Code of Corporate Governance which lists the enabling statutes governing the Authority and the Service.</li> <li>• The Authority utilises powers to the full benefit of their communities, including active participation in Strategic partnerships.</li>   <li>• Operation by lawful acts of Government i.e. Fire Services Act, Local Government Act.</li>   <li>• A full induction and training programme for Members is in place, focusing on roles and responsibilities of FRA Members as well as key areas of work.</li> </ul>

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<p><b>Developing the capacity and capability of members and officers to be effective:</b> By:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Providing induction programmes tailored to individual needs and opportunities for Members and officers to update their knowledge on a regular basis.</li> <li>• Ensure that the statutory officers have the skills, resources and support necessary to perform effectively in their roles and that these roles are properly understood throughout the Authority.</li> <li>• Assess the skills required by Members and officers and make a commitment to develop those skills to enable roles to be carried out effectively.</li> <li>• Develop skills on a continuing basis to improve performance, including the ability to scrutinise and challenge and to recognise when outside expert advice is needed.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The FRA provides induction programmes tailored to individual needs and opportunities for Members and all officers to update their knowledge on a regular basis. Standards Committee regularly monitor Members Training and recommended FRA and Group Leaders do more to improve Member attendance.</li> <li>• The FRA ensures that Members and all officers have the skills, knowledge, experience and resources they need to perform well in their roles.</li> <li>• All officers undertake appraisals which identify any training needs.</li> <li>• Regular reporting on Performance incorporates scrutiny to improve areas of poor performance.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Induction Programme is in place. All new Members attended 2009 Induction Session following local elections</li> <li>• Member Development Programme in place and endorsed by Standards Committee, Member support services include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Members Information Pack which includes key documents</li> <li>• Members' visits to Stations, Departments and key locations</li> <li>• Members' Information Bulletin</li> </ul> </li> <li>• All officers are appointed based on required skills and experience.</li> <li>• FRA decisions regarding objectives (e.g. IRMP) reflects necessary allocation of resources to objectives – e.g. Investment in Training.</li> </ul>

<b>The principles of good governance that we have adopted are:-</b>	<b>What we will do to meet them</b>	<b>How we will demonstrate compliance</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Ensure that effective arrangements are in place for reviewing the performance of the executive as a whole and of individual members and agreeing an action plan which might, for example, aim to address any training or development needs.</li><li>• Ensure that effective arrangements designed to encourage individuals from all sections of the community to engage with, contribute to and participate in the work of the Authority.</li><li>• Ensure that career structures are in place for Members and officers to encourage participation and development.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The FRA develops the capability of its people and evaluates their performance as individuals and as a group through specific training courses and competence assessments</li><li>• Consultation Plans incorporate a wide variety of venues/methods and techniques to meet diverse needs.</li><li>• The FRA encourages new talent for membership of the Authority so that best use can be made of an individual's skills and resources in balancing continuity and renewal.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Development opportunities delivered based on appraised evidence.</li><li>• Provision of diverse solutions/options during consultation and community engagement.</li><li>• Serve links with partner agencies to access excluded groups.</li></ul>

The principles of good governance that we have adopted are:-	What we will do to meet them	How we will demonstrate compliance
<p><b>Engaging with local people and other stakeholders to ensure robust public accountability:</b></p> <p>By:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Making clear to themselves, all staff and the community to whom they are accountable and for what.</li>   <li>• Considering those institutional stakeholders to whom the Authority is accountable and assessing the effectiveness of the relationships and any changes required.</li>   <li>• Producing an annual report on the activity of the scrutiny function.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Authority exercises leadership through a robust scrutiny function which effectively engages local people and all local institutional stakeholders including partnerships, and develops constructive accountability arrangements.</li>   <li>• The FRA positively promotes an open culture throughout all its areas of operation where the concept of Equality and Diversity is a given.</li>   <li>• BVPP Committee produces key subject area scrutiny reports.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All consultation and engagement mechanisms follow good practice and are proportionate e.g. IRMP 2010/11 consultation.</li>   <li>• All FRA and Committee meetings follow statutory guidance and are open to the public (except when considering exempt business).</li>   <li>• Consultation procedures (especially during the production of the Equality Scheme) show evidence of continuous engagement and capacity building of excluded groups to become effective consultees.</li> </ul>



The principles of good governance that we have adopted are:-	What we will do to meet them	How we will demonstrate compliance
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensuring that arrangements are in place to enable the Authority to engage with all sections of the community effectively. These arrangements should recognise that different sections of the community have different priorities and establish explicit processes for dealing with these competing demands.</li> <li>• Establishing a clear policy on the types of issues they will meaningfully consult on or engage with the public and service users about including a feedback and mechanism for those consultees to demonstrate what has changed as a result.</li> <li>• On an annual basis, publishing a performance plan giving information on the Authority's vision, strategy, plans and financial statements as well as information about its outcomes, achievements and the satisfaction of service users in the previous period.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communication and consultation procedures recognise diverse needs.</li> <li>• All changes to services (via IRMP) are consulted on annually. All consultation is proportionate and appropriate to changes being considered.</li> <li>• Service Plan published each year incorporates all listed elements.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communication plans incorporate actions to meet the needs of diverse groups.</li> <li>• Media &amp; Communication Strategy</li> <li>• Community Events designed to engage with local people and promote key safety messages.</li> <li>• The Authority's Equality Scheme outlines specific engagement activities for all sections of the community</li> <li>• All events and publications are accessible and any special needs identified are catered for in a reasonable manner. Language facilities are available for those requiring support in English.</li> <li>• Consultation Plan.</li> </ul>

<b>The principles of good governance that we have adopted are:-</b>	<b>What we will do to meet them</b>	<b>How we will demonstrate compliance</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensuring that the Authority as a whole is open and accessible to the community, service users and its staff and ensuring that it has made a commitment to openness and transparency in all its dealings, including partnerships, subject only to the need to preserve confidentiality in those specific circumstances where it is proper and appropriate to do so.</li>   <li>• Developing and maintaining a clear policy on how staff and their representatives are consulted and involved in decision making.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Media &amp; Communications Plan outlines areas for consultation and potential methodologies and good practice in communication.</li>   <li>• Staff and representative bodies consulted regularly through staff workshops, individual/group consultations etc.</li> <li>• Policing in place on rep. body involvement and consultation.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Service Plan.</li> <li>• Media &amp; Communications Plan.</li> <li>• Charter Mark</li> <li>• Publication Scheme</li> <li>• Complaints, concerns, letters of appreciation reported to FRA</li> <li>• Public access to FRA and Committee meetings. Guidance on submitting questions to the FRA is published on the Service website</li>   <li>• Media &amp; Communications Plan.</li> <li>• Joint Protocols for Industrial Relations Policy.</li> </ul>