

**Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Authority
Corporate Governance Action Plan 2021/22**

The review of the effectiveness of the Authority's governance framework for 2020/21 has identified the following actions for inclusion within the Annual Governance Statement and will need to be addressed during 2021/22.

| Ref. | Improvement action | | Lead Officer |
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| 1 | Review membership of the Corporate Governance Board. | New action for 2021/22 | AM Strategy and Performance |
| 2 | Review the transparency section of the TWFRS website. | New action for 2021/22 | AM Strategy and Performance / Finance Director |
| 3 | Review the department heads self-assessment statements to ensure they remain appropriate and up to date in preparation for the 2021/22 annual governance review. | New action for 2021/22 | AM Strategy and Performance |
| 4 | Review and refresh the Members' questionnaire content in preparation for the 2021/22 annual governance review. | New action for 2021/22 | AM Strategy and Performance |
| 5 | Review the format and complexity of Authority and Committee reports to ensure they meet accessibility standards. | New action for 2021/22 | AM Strategy and Performance |
| 6 | Review member induction training and development. | New action for 2021/22 | AM Strategy and Performance |
| 7 | Arrange for the provision of anti-fraud and bribery training for TWFRS Members, managers and staff. | New action for 2021/22 | HR Director |
| 8 | Further guidance and training required for staff on Privacy Impact Assessment to improve staff understanding of and compliance with PIA requirements. | New action for 2021/22 | HR Director |

Annual Governance Review 2019/20 – progress update

The Annual Governance Statement 2019/20 contained the following improvement actions for progression during 2020/21. Details of the issues and how they have been addressed during the year are noted below and have been reported to the Governance Committee at their meeting on 8 March 2021.

Please note that whilst improvement plans are in place to address these issues, due to their significance impact of the covid-19 pandemic, the seven actions below have been carried forward into the 2021/2022 action plan to enable their ongoing monitoring.

| Ref. | Improvement action | Status | Lead Officer | Update |
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| 43 | Review and streamline policies and procedures, to include PIA & EIA and support training, to align to new strategic planning framework. | In progress Carried forward from 2018/19 action plan | AM Strategy and Performance | <p>2021/22 update New templates, guidance and approval process approved at 9 April Corporate Governance Board and will be rolled out during May. The Senior Leadership Team (SLT) have been requested to provide a timeline for updates using a RAG status and predicted date for completion. This will be the timetable for updates moving forward and will inform progress. The central document directory is live now and has been signposted to SLT. Staff communications will be sent. Next steps are to establish a working group to review Service procedures that are risk critical/critically out of timescale for review. This will be established at the next SLT meeting due to be held 9 June.</p> <p>2019/20 – Action to review and streamline policies has commenced and will be completed in 2019/20 via a Policies and Procedures Working Group convened of staff from across the Service.</p> <p>2020/21 – Review undertaken – new register of policies and procedures produced and prioritisation of review dates complete. Templates, guidance document and intranet pages established, for roll out to SLT in January 2021. Roll out delayed due to Covid.</p> <p><u>Actions for 2021/22:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Roll out standardised development process (including templates and guidance) and support SLT in review and update programme off all procedures by end 2021. • Carry out regular monitoring of policy and procedure directory to ensure corporate oversight. |
| 50 | Project management principles and processes are applied i.e. PSUs and evaluations completed in all projects. | In progress Carried forward from 2018/19 action plan | AM Strategy and Performance | <p>2021/22 update A new project management framework has been established and work is ongoing to automate paperwork and source training for SMG and project managers. A Programme Board, chaired by the DCFO, has also been established to ensure corporate oversight of all projects, and a new Service Procedure is in place. The Programme Management Office, to co-ordinate all project work and support the Board, is currently being developed (within the Business Improvement Team).</p> |

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| | | | | <p>2018/19 – Monitoring during 2018/19 to ensure compliance with the approach.</p> <p>2018/19 – Framework is in place but not yet consistently applied. Being addressed through closer integration of projects and project evaluation into corporate planning process.</p> <p>2019/20 – Process developed but to be embedded through consistent practice and closer integration of project start-ups (PSUs) into annual planning process.</p> <p>2021/21 – This action has been superseded by the introduction of the Programme Management Office</p> <p><u>Actions for 2020/21:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project Management and Evaluation Toolkit to be reviewed by Sept 2020 Project management procedure completed and out for consultation with the FBU and SLT. • L&OD sourcing project management / evaluation training for SLT, P&E and key roles, as part of the HMICFRS Improvement Plan actions. Programme Management training is being sourced from an external provider and will comprise of two sessions, an overview for Programme Management Board members and a 2 day course for project leads. • Implement Business Improvement Programme Management Board PMO established and full corporate oversight of all change initiatives are visible with appropriate governance measures in place (time, cost, scope and benefits). Discussions ongoing to establish integration of the PMO within the Business Support and Improvement team during quarter 2/3 2021. |
| 60 | Information Asset Register (IAR) and recording system to be reviewed, supported by new technology and further training | <p>In progress</p> <p>Carried forward from 2019/20 action plan</p> | HR Director | <p>2021/22 update</p> <p>Development of Information Asset Register and Retention Schedule Policy is ongoing. Individual meetings with department heads to discuss and review departmental assets and retention is underway. A workshop for the Senior Management Group will take place in September and an eLearning package for all staff is being developed.</p> <p>Actions for 2021/22</p> <p>Further guidance and training to be provided to staff on the Information Asset Register, responsibilities of an Information Asset Owner and departmental roles and responsibilities.</p> <p>2020/21 update –New Information Asset Register (IAR) is currently being rolled out in conjunction with Microsoft (MS) Teams. When departments request a new Team they must complete the IAR for their department, which has been simplified. Data and Information Manager and Information Governance Advisor are currently working with departments to support roll out and highlight IAR and records retention procedure for guidance.</p> <p><u>Actions for 2020/21:</u></p> |

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| | | | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Further Training for SMG Required 2020/21 <p>2020/21 update – IAR is now fully integrated into the MS Teams channel procedure. ICT will not authorise any Team without the relevant IAR update which is authorised by the Information Governance Advisor. Training on IAR and the records retention schedule has commenced with department heads w/c 11 January 2021. Information Governance training is being sourced for members of ELT.</p> |
| 66 | Establish corporate oversight of TWFRS Partnership Register - review register and process, embed evaluation / benefits realisation of collaboration. | <p>In progress</p> <p>Carried forward from 2020/21 action plan</p> | AM Strategy and Performance | <p>2021/22 update</p> <p>Management of register brought into new Business Support and Improvement Team to establish corporate oversight and improve records. Initial review of guidance documents, templates and current process has been undertaken by Executive Support. New guidance has been developed with some informal consultation already taken place. This document has been condensed and has heavily relied on signposting to relevant specialist areas, such as details for Equality Impact Assessments and Risk Assessment documents.</p> <p>Policy and procedure documents are also in draft as we have been unable to locate a separate policy or procedure. This will require extensive work and some technical support to fully review and write but a working draft is in progress.</p> <p>A guidance narrative has also been added to the Partnership Review Template and Partnership Risk Assessment forms themselves to support with completion. Again, these are in first draft.</p> <p>It has been identified that there may be a need to formulate an agreement template that can have non applicable sections deleted as appropriate to ensure that all legal and regulatory requirements are being addressed within the individual agreements. Initial agreements are drafted on an ad hoc basis.</p> <p>A prototype Partnership Register is in development which records the key details of the partnerships we were aware of. This enabled the team to initiate contact with departments where we had record of an agreement and commence the process of updating the current information.</p> <p>That update process has begun and is in progress. All of the most recent partnership documents we hold have been forwarded to relevant heads of department with a request that they complete the Partnership Review Template for each agreement, in order to be added to the register and filed centrally.</p> <p><u>Actions for 2021/22:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Introduce process for benefits realisation of partnerships Maintain partnership register and produce regular updates for ELT |

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| 67 | <p>Roll out training on CG for SLT – including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) CG principles, CG cycle b) info asset management, c) Impact Assessments (PIA / EIA). | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Complete b) In progress c) In progress <p>Carried forward from 2020/21 action plan</p> | <p>AM Strategy and Performance / HR Director</p> | <p>2021/22 update</p> <p>a) An introduction to CG training was undertaken with the Senior Leadership Team on a one to one basis March - April 2021, and attendance was recorded on Core. Post-training feedback was received from participants to identify what they learned, additional training requirements and the types of information / signposting they would like to see on the CG intranet page. CG intranet page established.</p> <p>b) Individual meetings with department heads to discuss and review departmental assets and retention is underway. A workshop for the Senior Management Group will take place in September and an eLearning package for all staff is being developed.</p> <p>c) The following documents have been drafted and are ready for publication.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • INC001 Equality Impact Assessment Guidance • INC002 Record of Equality Impact Assessment • INC002GUIDE Record of Equality Impact Assessment • Completed INC002 Record of EIA on EIA package <p>Awareness training, departmental and individual support is being provided on a needs to ensure all documents part of the HMI document request have undergone the process of EIA, and to increase the organisational awareness of the process of EIA and our commitment to the PSED. All staff will be aware that proposals (new and reviewed) are subject to the process of EIA prior to being implemented/republished.</p> <p>2020/21 update – New Governance Advisor role created and appointed in September 2020. Review of corporate governance (CG) awareness undertaken with the Senior Management Group to establish level of understanding. Research undertaken into training options.</p> <p><u>Actions for 2021/22:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Roll out new CG training across the Service and evaluate impact. |
| 68 | <p>Review Strategic / Corporate Plan – (ensure Strategic Planning Framework (including vision, mission and corporate goals), aligns to organisational strategies, policies, procedures and</p> | <p>In progress</p> <p>Carried forward from 2020/21 action plan</p> | <p>AM Strategy and Performance</p> | <p>2021/22 update</p> <p>Strategic planning framework reviewed and a new TWFRS Strategy 2025 (and associated Service Operating Plan) is in development. Development postponed due to other priorities /limited resources. The new Strategy will be published in Summer 2021.</p> <p>2020/21 update – Interim Strategic Community Safety Plan (SCSP) published for 2020/21 with full review of process postponed to 2021, due to the impact of COVID-19. Consultation undertaken with ELT and SLT and research across other fire and rescue</p> |

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| | department annual plans, and PDRs are linked. | | | <p>services / organisations' to establish proposed approach for a five year strategy. Development of 2020-25 strategy now underway for publication in April 2021.</p> <p><u>Actions for 2021/22:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Publish new TWFRS Strategy 2020-25 and refresh all corporate documentation accordingly. • Communicate new approach and strategy to all staff, clarifying link between organisational strategy, priorities and individual objectives (golden thread). |
| 69 | Assess / evaluate impact of COVID-19 on our corporate governance arrangements (e.g. information security, policies, agile working, and communications). | <p>In progress –</p> <p>Carried forward from 2020/21 action plan</p> | AM Strategy and Performance | <p>2021/22 update</p> <p>Continue to review and update policy and procedures to support ways of working. Monitor working practices to ensure adherence with governance arrangements. This will be integrated within the Service Improvement and Assurance Plan.</p> <p>2020/21 update – The Service established a COVID-19 Response and Recovery Group in March 2020 and this group assesses and monitors the impact of the pandemic on all Service activities, including governance arrangements. Early in the pandemic, the Fire Authority confirmed the CFO's emergency decision making powers, but retained corporate oversight of all decisions. Agile working arrangements were introduced early in the pandemic, to ensure services could still be delivered whilst protecting staff, and policies were updated accordingly. A new COVID-19 portal was established as the main way of communicating with staff, including those working remotely and shielding.</p> |