Hampshire & Isle of Wight FIRE & RESCUE AUTHORITY

Corporate Governance

Policy number (AP009)

Next Review Due 31/03/2029

1. Purpose

Hampshire and Isle of Wight Fire and Rescue Authority (HIWFRA) is committed to ensuring that Hampshire and the Isle of Wight have an efficient and effective fire and rescue service which makes life safer for everyone.

All Policies within the Authority's Policy Framework are to be considered as a collective and not read in isolation.

This Policy sets HIWFRA's commitment to meet its statutory responsibilities as an organisation through a corporate governance framework that safeguards public funds and upholds public trust, by preventing theft, fraud, bribery and corruption. It promotes effective leadership, informed decision-making, accountability, and transparency to support the continual improvement of services for our communities.

2. Principles

2.1 We will conduct the Authority with strong corporate governance that supports our vision and organisational purpose.

2.2 We are committed to following good governance practices, through openness, accountability, promoting informed decision-making, managing risks, and ensuring legislative compliance.

2.3 We will establish internal controls and reporting mechanisms to ensure effective oversight and accountability.

2.4 We are committed to safeguarding public funds ensuring trust, honesty and integrity, and expect all members, employees, suppliers, contractors and stakeholders to uphold our values.

2.5 We are committed to preventing, deterring, and detecting all forms of theft, fraud, bribery and corruption, or other irregularities, and will take appropriate action when detected.

2.6 We will prioritise, manage and mitigate foreseeable community risks with agility and foresight to safeguard our communities.

2.7 We will adopt business continuity and resilience plans to ensure compliance with legislative requirements and best practice where appropriate.

2.8 We will adopt a strategic approach to communication, stakeholder engagement, and consultation to enable our communities to actively contribute to their local services where appropriate.

2.9 We commit to protecting data with robust data management practices and information security measures.

2.10 We will conduct transparent and fair procurement processes, adhering to guidelines and regulations, while maintaining ethical practices and due diligence across our suppliers and supply chains.

2.11 We will ensure sufficient insurance coverage for our activities to minimise liability exposure.

2.12 We will use performance reporting and data analysis to monitor our efficiency and effectiveness.

2.13 We will ensure continuous organisational learning and improvement by assuring our activities and maintaining thorough oversight.

2.14 We will respond positively to the recommendations of external audit and statutory inspections.

2.15 We will actively engage and collaborate with our partners and others, as appropriate, to maximise the benefits of our collective offering to the public.

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3. Compliance

Local Government Act 1972, Local Government and Housing Act 1989, Policing and Crime Act 2017, Localism Act 2011, The Openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations 2014, Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014, The Accounts and Audits Act 2015, The Accounts and Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014, The Accounts and Audits Regulations 2015, Statutory Auditors Regulations 2017, and Accounts and Audit (Amendment) Regulations 2022.
Theft Act 1968, Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998, Fraud Act 2006, and Bribery Act 2010.

Civil Contingencies Act 2004, and Civil Contingencies Act 2004 (Contingency Planning) Regulations.

The Local Government (Transparency Requirements) (England) Regulations 2015.
The Network and Information Systems (NIS) Regulations 2018, Data Protection Act 2018, General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR), Freedom of Information Act 2000, and Environmental Information Regulations 2004.
Employers' Liability (Compulsory Insurance) Act 1969, and Road Traffic Act 1988.
Local Government Act 1999, Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012, The Public Contracts Regulations 2015, Modern Slavery Act 2015, Procurement Act 2023, and Policing and Crime Act 2017.

All other relevant legislation, regulations and approved guidance, including the Fire and Rescue National Framework for England.

Professional guidance, including Delivering Good Governance in Local Government Framework (CIPFA/SOLACE), CIPFA Manging the Risks of Fraud and Corruption, and Audit Committees: Practical Guidance in Local Authorities CIPFA, and The Public Sector Internal Audit Standards (PSIAS), and National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) Guidance for ICT, and the National Cyber Security Centre (NCSC) guidance for ICT, and Local Authority Transparency Code 2015.

Fire Standards including Internal Governance and Assurance, Leading the Service, Code of Ethics, Communication and Engagement, Operational Learning, Procurement and Commercial, Community Risk Management Planning, Data Management, and Emergency Preparedness and Resilience.

4. Core Code of Ethics

HIWFRA is committed to meeting the principles within the Core Code of Ethics and will ensure that the principles in the Corporate Governance Policy reflect the requirements of the Code.

5. Governance

HIWFRA has responsibility for the functions of the fire and rescue service as specified in legislation, including the appointment of its statutory officers, each of whom is accountable for specific aspects of governance.

Members will have access to and undertake adequate training and development to better enable them to make informed decisions to fulfil their roles as Fire Authority Members.

HIWFRA delegates the operation of the principles contained within the Corporate Governance Policy to HIWFRS Chief Fire Officer, the Chief Financial Officer, and Monitoring Officer in accordance with its Constitution and the Safety Plan.

6. Appendix