

# Community Safety Directorate

## Governance Framework 2021

*“Working Together for a Safer Gloucestershire”*

# Contents

## Table of Contents

<b>1. Introduction .....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>2. About the Service .....</b>	<b>4</b>
2.1 Statutory Duties and Responsibilities .....	4
2.2 Directorate Drivers.....	6
<b>3. The Governance Framework .....</b>	<b>8</b>
3.1 The Framework .....	8
3.2 The Governance Structure .....	9
3.3 Roles and Responsibilities.....	9
3.3.1 Gloucestershire County Council.....	9
3.3.2 The Chief Fire Officer and Community Safety Director .....	10
3.3.3 The Deputy Chief Fire Officer.....	10
3.3.4 The Assistant Chief Fire Officer.....	11
3.3.5 GFRS Senior Leadership Team .....	11
3.3.6 Business Areas .....	11
3.3.7 Service Delivery Teams .....	12
3.3.8 Individual Employees .....	12
<b>4. Governance Mechanisms.....</b>	<b>13</b>
4.1 Overview .....	13
4.2 Key Corporate Governance Strategies/Systems and Processes .....	13
4.2.1 GCC Arrangements.....	13
4.2.2 CSD Arrangements .....	14
4.2.3 Governance Bodies .....	24
4.2.4 Monitoring, Recording and Reporting .....	30

# 1.Introduction

Good corporate governance is fundamental to an effective organisation and is the hallmark of a well-managed corporate entity. Correctly applied it leads to good management, good performance, good stewardship of public money, good public engagement and ultimately, good outcomes for the communities we serve.

A governance framework is the systems, processes, culture and values by which an organisation is directed and controlled, and the activities through which it is accountable, engages with and leads the communities it is responsible for. It enables an organisation to monitor the achievement of its strategic objectives and to consider whether those objectives have ultimately led to intended delivery of appropriate services and value for money.

The purpose of this framework is to articulate the Community Safety Directorates (CSD) vision, strategic regulatory compliance within the organisational framework of GCC, accountability and decision making processes. The objective is to help provide transparency, clarity of purpose and encourage ownership amongst our staff, stakeholders and partners.

The framework contributes towards a better common understanding of corporate governance within the Service, the Code of Corporate Governance and aligns to the seven core principles set out in guidance<sup>1</sup> issued by the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) and the Society of Local Authority Chief Executives and Senior Managers (SOLACE) namely:

1. Behaving with integrity, demonstrating strong commitment to ethical values, and respecting the rule of law;
2. Ensuring openness and comprehensive stakeholder engagement;
3. Defining outcomes in terms of sustainable economic, social, and environmental benefits;
4. Determining the interventions necessary to optimise the achievement of the intended outcomes;
5. Developing the entity's capacity, including the capability of its leadership and the individuals within it;
6. Managing risks and performance through robust internal control and strong public financial management;
7. Implementing good practices in transparency, reporting, and audit to deliver effective accountability.

CSD will ensure that all areas of activity within each of the seven core principles are assessed on an annual basis with gaps being addressed (Annual Governance Statement and Annual Business Plan) and identified risks where appropriate, reflected in the GFRS Corporate Risk Register.

The framework is aligned to Gloucestershire County Council's approach to Corporate Governance as a whole. In order to provide a comprehensive approach to corporate governance the following additional information is produced to underpin this framework:

- An Annual Governance Statement and Annual Service Plan

The Annual Governance Statement and Annual Business Plan is cross mapped to the seven core principles of governance and is designed to show how the Service meets these principles.

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<sup>1</sup> Delivering Good Governance in Local Government (2016 Edition)

## 2. About the Service

The Community Safety Directorate (CSD) is an integral element of the County Council and is responsible for delivering Civil Protection, Coroners, Fire and Rescue and Trading Standards Services to all of the communities throughout the county of Gloucestershire.

CSD headquarters are based within the county's Tri-Service Centre at Quedgeley, Gloucester (alongside the Police), with the exception of Coroners which operates out of Coroners Court in Barnwood. Fire and Rescue emergency response is delivered by fire appliances and fire-fighters from a network of 21 fire stations located strategically across the county.

**CSD has a number of functional areas:**

- Civil Protection Team
- Coroners
- Prevention and Protection (Fire)
- Response and Resilience (Fire)
- Business Planning and Performance (Fire)
- Organisational development and Transformation (Fire)
- Logistics and Resources (Fire)
- Finance and Compliance (Fire)
- Trading Standards

### 2.1 Statutory Duties and Responsibilities

The legislation governing the overall functions of CSD are covered by the following:

- [Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004](#)
- [Policing and Crime Act 2017](#)
- [Civil Contingencies Act 2004](#)
- [Crime and Disorder Act 1998](#)
- [Regulatory Reform \(Fire Safety\) Order 2005](#)
- [Fire and Rescue Service \(Emergencies\)\(England\) Order 2007](#)
- [Localism Act 2011](#)
- [Public Services \(Social Value\) Act 2013](#)
- [The Coroner & Justice Act 2009 \(Coroners\)](#)
- [The Human Tissue Act 2004 \(Coroners\)](#)
- [Equality Act 2010](#)

The primary legislative provisions which determine the functions of the Directorate include:

- Promoting fire safety
- Extinguishing fires and protecting life and property
- Rescuing people from road traffic accidents (and a large range of other risks determined through the Emergencies Order)

- Responding to other types of emergencies
- Entering into reinforcement schemes with other fire authorities for mutual assistance
- Assess the risk of emergencies occurring and use this to inform contingency planning
- Cooperate with other local responders to reduce crime, disorder and re-offending (including anti-social and other behaviour adversely affecting the local environment) and;
- A duty on police, fire and rescue and emergency ambulance services to collaborate where it is in the interests of their efficiency or effectiveness
- Talking to local communities to design better services
- Protecting the vulnerable from harm
- Supporting a thriving business environment
- Deterring organised criminality and assisting partner agencies
- Product safety
- Eradicating rogue traders
- Ensuring food quality
- Supporting the rural population
  - Animal health and disease control
  - Protecting isolated businesses from harm

## Fire and Rescue National Framework for England (2018)

The Government outlines expectations of English Fire & Rescue Services through the Fire and Rescue National Framework for England. One of the Governments expectations is the assessment of all foreseeable fire and rescue related risks that could affect communities, including those of a cross border, multi-authority and/or national nature.

Key priorities set out in the Framework include:

- Making appropriate provision for fire prevention and protection activities and response to fire and rescue related incidents;
- Identifying and assessing the full range of foreseeable fire and rescue related risks their areas face;
- Collaborating with emergency services and other local and national partners to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of the service they provide;
- Being accountable to communities for the service they provide; and
- Developing and maintaining a workforce that is professional, resilient, skilled, flexible and diverse.

Under the framework all Fire & Rescue Services must produce a local Integrated Risk Management Plan, which we call our Community Risk Management (CRMP) Plan, which gives due regard to Community Risk Registers and any other local risk analyses as appropriate.

Gloucestershire Fire and Rescue Service's CRMP is the Service's analysis of the county's community risk profile, together with our strategic approach for effectively managing that risk over a specified time period (normally three years).

Our current IRMP (2018 – 2021), which has been given a one year extension to 2022, can be viewed by clicking on this link:

<https://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/media/1519652/integrated-risk-management-plan-2018-21.pdf>

## 2.2 Directorate Drivers

To meet expectations laid down in statute the Directorate has developed and implemented the following vision:

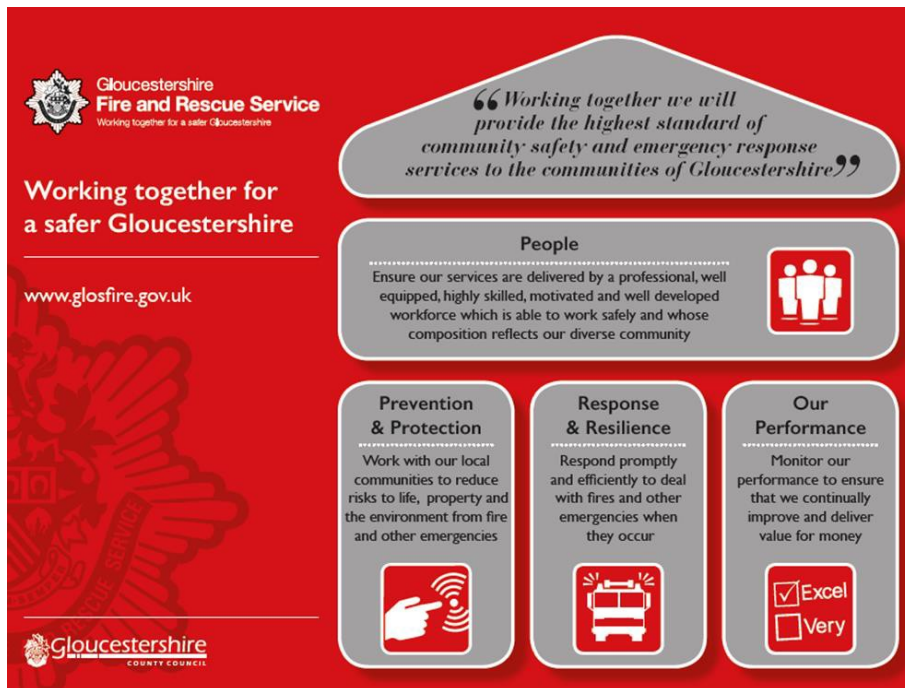
### Our Mission:

Working Together for a Safer Gloucestershire.

### Mission Statement:

***“Working in partnership we will provide the highest standard of community safety and emergency response services to the communities of Gloucestershire”.***

The statement is supported by four very clear strategic aims which all of our staff are committed to:



### Our key focus, which is linked to the Council Strategy, includes:

- Reducing the number and severity of fires, road traffic collisions and other emergency incidents occurring in Gloucestershire
- Reducing the severity of injuries due to fires, road traffic collisions and other emergency incidents
- Reducing the commercial, economic and social impact of fires and other emergency incidents
- Providing value for money.

### Our core values:

Our core values, realigned in 2020 to GCC's core values are now reflective of a modern, forward thinking Directorate that aims to perform to the highest standards.



## 3. The Governance Framework

### 3.1 The Framework

The governance framework enables Gloucestershire County Council and its Directorates to monitor the achievement of strategic objectives, and to consider whether objectives have led to the delivery of appropriate services and value for money. The systems associated with internal control are integral to the framework (i.e. policies, procedures, processes, tasks, behaviours, performance and other aspects of the organisation) and ensure that:

- Activities are conducted in accordance with the laws, regulations, internal policies and proper standards
- Significant risks are recognised, appropriately managed and recorded
- Assets are safeguarded from inappropriate use, or from loss and fraud
- Public money is safeguarded and properly accounted for, and used economically, efficiently and effectively
- Human, financial, environmental and other resources are managed efficiently and effectively
- Records and information are properly maintained
- Effective arrangements are in place for timely, relevant and reliable internal and external reporting
- The organisation complies with values and ethical standards.

The GCC Constitution outlines the overarching governance arrangements and the interdependencies between the functional aspects namely planning, assurance, monitoring and reporting: -

<https://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/constitution/>



## 3.2 The Governance Structure

As Gloucestershire's fire and rescue services shares a boundary with a single 'upper tier' council, the council is the fire authority. This means the FRS is an integral part of the council, alongside other services, such as social care, education, public health and highways. There currently 14 FRAs of this type in England (11 county councils, the unitary authorities of Cornwall and Isle of Wight and the Council of the Isles of Scilly).

In order to operate within this overall governance structure and to ensure that the governance arrangements outlined in GCC's Constitution are appropriately managed, a formal governance structure is required. The structure that applies to Gloucestershire Fire and Rescue Service is shown in Fig 1 below:

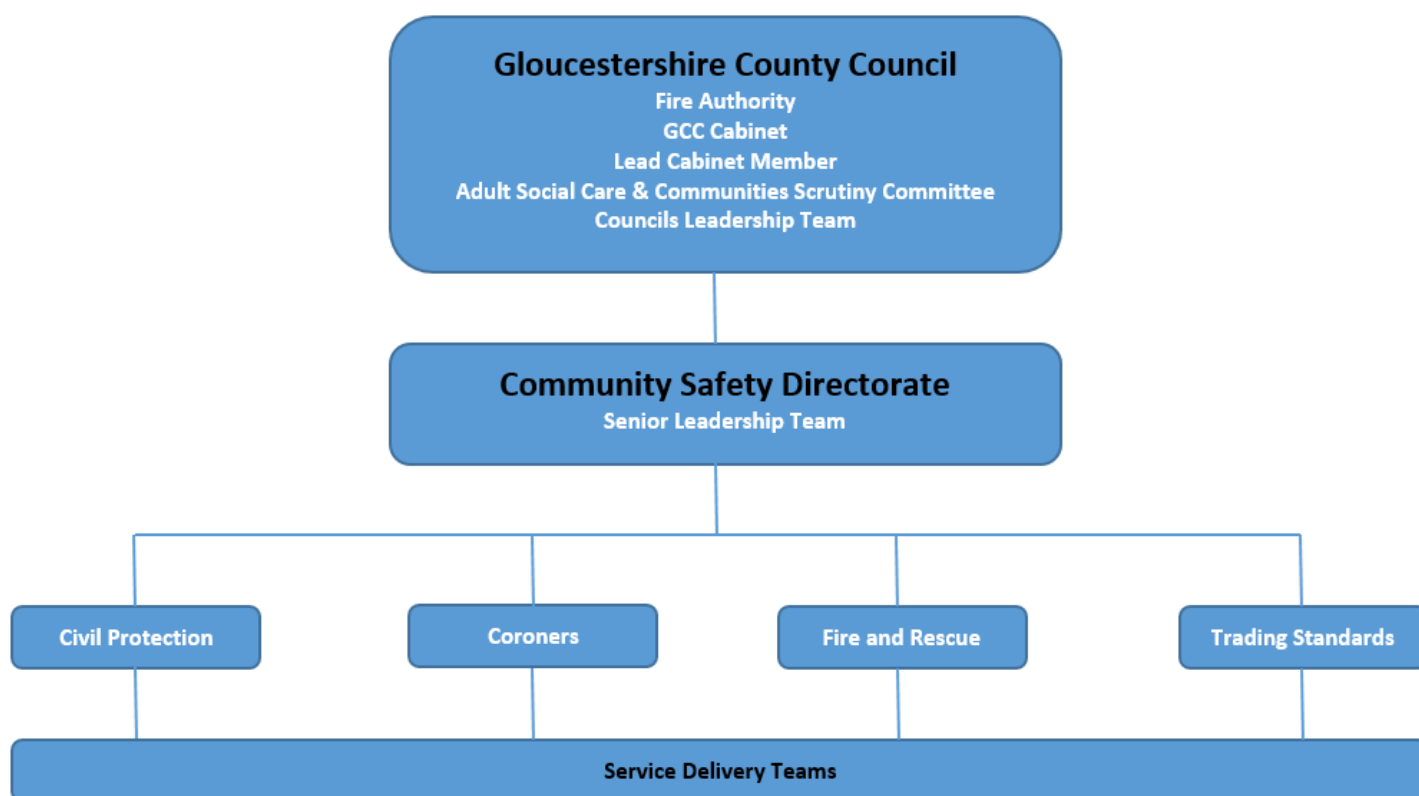


Fig 1

## 3.3 Roles and Responsibilities

### 3.3.1 Gloucestershire County Council is responsible for:

- Undertaking the role of the Fire Authority as prescribed under the [Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004](#)
- Setting the overarching [Corporate Strategy and setting the Directorate's budget](#)
- Internal audit of GFRS activities to ensure, among other things, the correctness of all income and expenditure and;
- Provision of an Annual Governance Statement as set out in the [Accounts and Audit \(England\) Regulations 2015](#) (as amended 2016).

**3.3.2 The Chief Fire Officer and Community Safety Director** is appointed by the Fire Authority and forms an integral part of the Council's Leadership Team within GCC, thereby providing a direct link between the Directorate and GCC.

The Chief Fire Officer can make executive decisions using the delegated powers set out in the Scheme of Delegation in the Council's Constitution:

- To manage the operations of the Gloucestershire Fire and Rescue Service
- To exercise all other functions relating to the areas of responsibility of the following services: Trading Standards, Coroners and Civil Protection (CFO2)

**Note:**

- The Scheme of Delegation provides guidance on the exercise of these delegated powers, including the need to consult with the most relevant Cabinet Member(s) or Chief Executive for decisions with financial implications over £250,000.
- All decisions with a value of £100,000 or more must be recorded in the Officer Decision report and those with a value of £250,000 or more must also be sent to the Corporate Governance Manager for publication.
- Further guidance is available on The Decision Making Process page on Staffnet.

The Chief Fire Officer is also responsible for:

- Overall planning and management of the budget for the Directorate
- Reporting to the Cabinet and recommending for their consideration matters affecting finance and Service policy.

The Chief Fire Officer also undertakes the following in relation to regulatory services:

- Sign warrants and authorise Officers to enforce the legislation referred to in the Trading Standards Legislation Master Lists A to D held by the Assistant Director of Legal Services and issue statutory notices in relation to that legislation.

The Chief Fire Officer is required to assist in the preparation of the Annual Governance Statement for the Council by providing an **Annual Governance Statement** covering the internal control framework operating within the Directorate.

The Chief Fire Officer must also ensure a **Statement of Assurance** (incorporating a Statement of Accounts), is produced for GFRS which demonstrates that the Service has fulfilled its obligations under the [Fire and Rescue National Framework for England May 2018](#).

**3.3.3 The Deputy Chief Fire Officer** will assume command of the Service in the absence of the Chief Fire Officer and will ensure that all responsibilities and duties delegated are carried out in accordance with the appropriate Acts and Regulations. In accordance with the role, the Deputy Chief Fire Officer also assumes day-to-day responsibility for the Service's support functions and management of the county's Trading Standards Team.

The Deputy Chief Fire Officer can make executive decisions using delegated powers set out in the Scheme of Delegation in the Council's Constitution:

- Without prejudice to the powers of the Director of Economy, Environment and Infrastructure to sign warrants and authorise Officers to enforce the legislation referred to in the Trading Standards Legislation Master List held by the Assistant Director of Legal Services and to issue statutory notices in relation to that legislation.

**3.3.4 The Assistant Chief Fire Officer** assumes responsibility for the day-to-day management of the Service's core fire related prevention and response activities and management of the county's Civil Protection Team.

**3.3.5 GFRS Senior Leadership Team** is collectively responsible for the implementation and delivery of the Council's strategy and:

- Recommending to Cabinet and ultimately the Council the overall strategy for the organisation (in line with GCC's Corporate Strategy); which is encompassed in the Mission Statement:

*'Working together we will provide the highest standard of community safety and emergency response services to the communities of Gloucestershire'*

- Providing leadership - primary focus is a collective strategic leadership, however this requires the support of individual, team and operational leadership.
- Governance – ensuring a framework of accountability to users, stakeholders and the wider community by taking decisions to achieve our objectives
- Delivering Improvement – providing clear communication of direction with specific and measurable performance expectations
- Making service level decisions that affect the whole organisation
- Identifying, recording and appropriately managing corporate risks
- Ensuring delivery of effective and efficient services
- A collaborative approach to making efficiency savings

**Note:** Although SLT can endorse a direction of travel, they cannot make a collective decision - all decisions require individual assent.

**3.3.6 Business Areas** have senior managers, nominated as lead officers for specific areas of service delivery. The nominated officers are responsible for ensuring activities are carried out in line with and directly contribute towards delivery of:

- Directorate 'Mission' Statement and core aims
- Identified objectives set out in the CRMP
- Outcomes laid down within the Annual Business Plan

In order to meet these objectives, the nominated lead officers are also responsible for:

- Developing and maintaining service policy and procedures
- Developing individual team plans
- Managing delivery of effective and efficient services
- Reporting progress against plans
- Provision of measurable data to GCC and SLT that is cross-mapped to identified targets and indicators within the Annual Business Plan.

**3.3.7 Service Delivery Teams** utilising a variety of methods are responsible for delivery of the Directorate's stated aims, namely:

- **Aim 1** - Working with our local communities to reduce risks to life, property and the environment from fire and other emergencies
- **Aim 2** - Responding promptly and effectively to deal with fire and other emergencies when they occur
- **Aim 3** - Ensure our services are delivered by a professional, well equipped, highly skilled, motivated and well developed workforce which is able to work safely and whose composition reflects our diverse community
- **Aim 4** - Monitor performance to ensure we continually improvement and deliver value for money

### **3.3.8 Individual Employees**

All staff irrespective of their role or position within the Directorate are required to comply with their individual contractual terms, scheme of conditions of service and [GCC's Employee Code of Conduct](#)

The Code of Conduct encompasses the following elements:

- Standards
- Personal Appearance
- Use of the Council's Facilities and Equipment
- Fraud and Corruption
- Gifts, Hospitality and Sponsorship
- Register of Gifts and Hospitality
- Disclosure and Use of Information
- Political Neutrality
- Relationships
- Appointments and Other Employment Matters
- Undertaking Additional Outside Work
- Arrest or conviction on civil or criminal charges
- Membership of clubs, societies and other organisations
- Equality Issues
- Health and Safety Issues
- Confidential Reporting Procedure (whistleblowing)
- Breaches of the Code of Conduct.

**Note:** A full copy of the Employee Code of Conduct can be found on Staffnet using the link above.

## 4. Governance Mechanisms

### 4.1 Overview

Internal control systems are a significant part of the governance framework designed to manage risk to a reasonable level. They cannot eliminate all risk of failure to achieve policies, aims and objectives and can therefore only provide reasonable and not absolute assurance of effectiveness.

Internal control systems are designed to identify and prioritise the risks to the achievement of policies, aims and objectives, to evaluate the likelihood and potential impact of those risks being realised, and to manage them efficiently, effectively and economically.

### 4.2 Key Corporate Governance Strategies/Systems and Processes

#### 4.2.1 GCC Arrangements

As an integral element of GCC, the CSD must adhere to internal control strategies, systems and processes put in place by GCC that contribute to effective governance arrangements and underpin the council's core principles. These are listed below:

- [\*\*The Council's Constitution\*\*](#): describes the individuals and groups that make up the County Council (that is, its "composition") and the principal rules and procedures that govern the way it operates, including clearly defined decision making processes.
- [\*\*The Council Strategy\*\*](#): defines the Council's key priorities and plans, following full consultation with the communities of Gloucestershire.
- [\*\*Medium Term Financial Strategy\*\*](#): describes the Council's financial strategy and detailed budget to meet the priorities of the Council's Strategy.
- [\*\*Anti Fraud and Corruption Policy Statement and Strategy\*\*](#): defines the Council's response to fraud and irregularity.
- [\*\*Performance Management\*\*](#): defines the Council's corporate performance management arrangements, including audits, inspections and assessments.
- [\*\*Risk Management Policy Statement and Strategy\*\*](#): defines how risk is managed within the Council and our partners.
- [\*\*Information Management and Security Policies\*\*](#): defines how the Council's information is managed and secured.
- **Members training programmes and briefings**: to support continued Member development.
- [\*\*Employee Code of Conduct\*\*](#)
- **Officers' Development Programmes**: (to support continued officer development)

- **Customer Care Standards**: enables the Council to act quickly and efficiently to put things right if something goes wrong; and to learn from customer complaints in order to improve services and focus on the needs of customers.
- **External Audit arrangements**: The District Audit Service (external audit) provide (a) an independent opinion on the financial statements and (b) a value for money conclusion focusing on financial resilience and the three 'E's i.e. Economy, Efficiency and Effectiveness.
- **Internal Audit arrangements**: Internal Audit provide independent and objective assurance that the key risks to the achievement of objectives/priorities are managed adequately and that anti-fraud and corruption arrangements are in place to ensure financial probity.

#### 4.2.2 CSD Arrangements

- **Portfolio Management Office**: ensures that projects and work streams are developed in line with our objectives and appropriately monitored. The Portfolio Management Office is accountable to the GFRS Senior Leadership Team (SLT) and will report into SLT on all work streams. The GFRS Portfolio Management Board agrees projects and work streams and provides continuous monitoring and a robust performance management framework to ensure progress is made. This includes areas of concern identified in the HMICFRS inspection report. Where progress is stalled the board will be responsible for either ensuring that the required resources are provided or unblocking barriers to ensure priority work is delivered on time. The management of the PMO has GCC oversight.
- **Community Risk Management Plan**: defines GFRS's key priorities and plans over a specified period (normally 3 years), following full consultation with the communities of Gloucestershire.
- **Annual Service Plan**: produced by the Directorate and linked to both Outcome Agreements in GCC's Corporate Strategy and the CRMP. The plan sets out key elements of core business and includes the 'Balanced Scorecard' which outlines targets / indicators for the Service to deliver against; progress / performance in relation to these targets is scrutinised by SLT and reported upon to GCC.
- **Team Plans**: produced by functional teams and linked directly to the Annual Business Plan. These plans set out key elements of "the day job" that teamswork to and give the context for Individual Performance Plans (IPP).

Team plans are underpinned by local risk reduction plans that outline how GFRS and identified partners will work together at a 'grass roots' level to promote safety and deliver risk intervention measures in the communities across Gloucestershire.

Timescales for development of these plans and identified reporting periods are captured in the **Annual Planning and Performance Management Cycle**; see figure 2 on the following page.



Fig 2

- **Service Policies:** put into context the organisation's strategy giving direction regarding a principle or course of action to be adopted by all Directorate personnel; in general terms these cover 'day to day' or core business activities.

Where there is a direct correlation to policies and operating principles between GCC and the Service, for example Equalities, Finance, Procurement etc., the Directorate naturally defaults to, and follows GCC's (as our 'parent' organisation) policy.

**All Service Policies can be found on 'StaffHub' under the tab labelled '[Central Library](#)'.**

**All GCC policies can found on the GCC 'Staffnet' system under the tab labelled '[Policies, procedures and forms](#)'.**

**Note:** Corporate and organisational policy is subject to periodic review and update; therefore it is best practice to refer to the electronic copy held on the respective system to ensure compliance with current practice.

- **Operational Procedures:** are based on National Operational Guidance for specific incidents or types of hazard and encompass safe systems of work in order to protect and where possible, enhance fire-fighter safety arrangements within the operational environment.

**Operational Procedures can be found on 'StaffHub' under the tab labelled '[Central Library](#)'.**

- **Principles of Decision Making** (linked to the planning cycle)

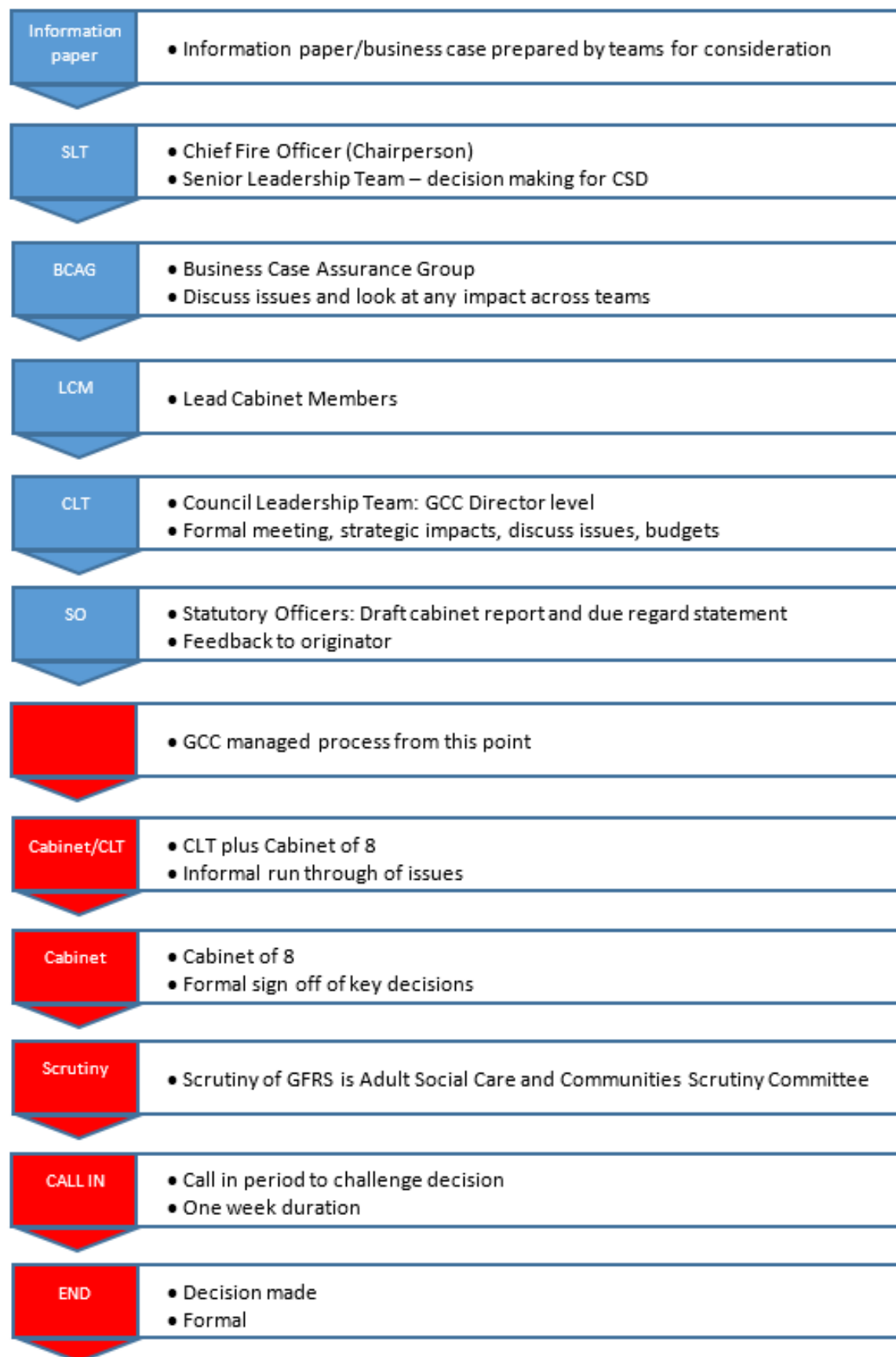
Responsibilities, authority and limitations in relation to decision making regarding GFRS activities are clearly outlined under section 3.3 Roles and Responsibilities. The paperwork and step-by-step process guides for Cabinet, Cabinet Member and Officer Decisions can found on [The Decision Making Page on Staffnet](#).

Irrespective of the level at which decisions are made or who holds / takes responsibility for making the decision, the principles of decision-making (GCC Constitution) should be adhered to. These are:

- They must be lawful
- They must involve a proportionate exercise of power relative to the desired outcome
- They should take proper account of consultation with others
- They should have proper regard to officer's advice
- They should respect human rights
- They should be made in public wherever this is appropriate and practicable
- Their aims and outcomes should be clear
- They should be properly reasoned and alternatives that are discounted should be identified and the reasons for rejection explained adequately
- In addition, Cabinet, when taking decisions, must do so in accordance with council policy, the Cabinet Procedure and rules on Access to Information in Part 4 of the Constitution.

The starting point to enable strategic decision making in relation to Directorate activities must be a paper set out on the Strategic Leadership Team (SLT) Business template. The template is designed to ensure that those putting information forward for due consideration have encompassed and undertaken actions required in relation to many of the decision making principles e.g. rationale and options, financial considerations, equalities impacts, requirements for consultation, etc. It should be noted that the Scheme of Delegation gives power to the Chief Fire Officer (and those who he authorises to exercise his powers) to make decisions and SLT as a collective group does not have the power to make formal Council decisions.





If procedures dictate that information is required to be submitted beyond the remit of the Service for a formal decision to be made i.e. to individuals, boards, committees or Cabinet, the original author will need to contact the Corporate Governance Manager to ensure that:

- The appropriate corporate template has been completed and;
- That any briefing note or report is submitted within the appropriate timescale to allow oversight to be applied before subsequent discussion / decision-making takes place.

- **Information Management and Security (Access to information)**

Information security means safeguarding information from unauthorised access or modification to ensure its:

- Confidentiality – ensuring that the information is accessible only to those authorised to have access;
- Integrity – safeguarding the accuracy and completeness of information by protecting against unauthorised modification;
- Availability – ensuring that authorised users have access to information and associated assets when required.

There are primary pieces of legislation that cover information management and security:

- General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) (2018)
- Data Protection Act 2018;
- Freedom of Information Act (2000);
- Environmental Information Regulations (2004);
- Re-use of Public Sector Information (2015);
- Copyright, Designs and Patents Act (1988);
- Public Interest Disclosure Act (1998)

The [GDPR](#) defines how personal information is used by organisations, businesses or the government.

Everyone responsible for using data has to follow strict rules called 'data protection principles'. They must make sure the information is:

- used fairly, lawfully and transparently;
- used for limited, specifically stated purposes;
- used in a way that is adequate, relevant and not excessive;
- kept accurate and up to date;
- kept for no longer than is absolutely necessary; and
- kept safe and secure, covering physical, technical and organisational security measures.

In addition compliance with the law must be evidenced.

Further requirements include:

- Meeting legal conditions for using personal data;
- Ensuring there are appropriate contracts in place for any other organisation that is processing or storing personal data on our behalf;
- Personal data cannot be transferred outside the European Economic Area without meeting certain requirements;
- A register of processing activity (ROPA) must be maintained. This is captured in the corporate Information Asset Register (IAR).
- Individual's rights must be upheld, which include the right to:
  - Know how information about them is used ([privacy notices](#));
  - Access information held about them;
  - Object to processing;
  - Have personal data rectified or erased; and
  - Withdraw consent.

There is stronger legal protection for more sensitive information, such as:

- ethnic background
- political opinions
- membership of a trade union
- religious or philosophical beliefs
- physical or mental health
- sexual life or orientation
- criminal records
- genetics and biometrics

Internal arrangements covering data protection / disclosure of information include:

- Statutory Data Protection Officer has been appointed – [dpo@gloucestershire.gov.uk](mailto:dpo@gloucestershire.gov.uk)
- A nominated Senior Information Risk Owner is in place in GCC
- Information Asset Owners are identified for all information types held by the Service
- A [Data Protection Impact Assessment \(DPIA\)](#) must be considered when considering a new system, service or process that uses or affects personal information. The [DPIA screening checklist](#) will help you determine whether a DPIA must be completed. A DPIA must be completed for all uses of CCTV or other surveillance camera systems.
- All GFRS staff have been provided with guidance regarding their responsibilities in relation to data protection
- Service policy - Information Security Policy (located on StaffHub)

- [GCC Employee Code of Conduct](#) covers disclosure and use of information
- Government Protective Marking Scheme for clarification and control of information is applied
- Information Asset Risk Assessments have been completed for all information types
- An Information Asset Register with nominated responsible persons is in place
- ICT systems are:
  - Secured from unauthorised external access
  - Have internal access controls (permissions based)
  - Are periodically tested for security (penetration testing).
- [CCTV and Surveillance Camera Systems](#) must comply with both Data Protection Legislation and The Surveillance Camera Commissioner's Code of Practice.
- [Security breach process](#) is managed by GCC [informationsecurity@gloucestershire.gov.uk](mailto:informationsecurity@gloucestershire.gov.uk)
- A [GCC governance team](#) is available to advise and support you with information governance elements of projects, commissioning and process design.

The [Freedom of Information Act \(FOI\)](#) and Environmental Information Regulations (EIR) provides public access to information held by public authorities. It does this in two ways:

- Public authorities are obliged to publish certain information about their activities
- Members of the public are entitled to request information from public authorities.

Arrangements for accepting, recording and responding to FOI requests are centrally managed by GCC. [foi@gloucestershire.gov.uk](mailto:foi@gloucestershire.gov.uk)

Internally, FOI requests received are coordinated by the Strategic Support Officer, or in their absence the Principle Officer's Support Team. The coordination role ensures that FOI requests submitted are valid and that GFRS provides accurate information in a timely manner, without transgressing data protection legislation.

The [Public Interest Disclosure Act](#) was created by parliament to protect whistle-blowers from detrimental treatment or victimisation from their employers after they have made a qualifying disclosure.

Qualifying disclosures are termed as any disclosure of information, which, in the reasonable belief of the worker making the disclosure, tends to show one or more of the following:

- A criminal offence has been committed, is being committed or is likely to be committed;
- A person has failed, is failing or is likely to fail to comply with any legal obligation to which he is subject;
- A miscarriage of justice has occurred, is occurring or is likely to occur;
- The health or safety of any individual has been, is being or is likely to be endangered;
- The environment has been, is being or is likely to be damaged;
- Information tending to show any matter falling within any one of the preceding paragraphs has been, is being, or is likely to be, deliberately concealed.

Note: GFRS personnel are covered by GCC's procedures: Reporting Procedure for Employees (Whistle-Blowing) included within the [Employee Code of Conduct](#).

### **Responsibilities:**

Information security is everyone's responsibility and all employees, third parties and partners who have access to the Service's information are required to comply with legislative requirements, specific corporate and service policy and supporting policies, standards, and procedures.

- **Financial management**

GFRS do not have a bespoke service policy that governs financial management; specific financial guidance, accounting instructions and monitoring arrangements are driven centrally by GCC in accordance with legislative requirements.

Detailed policy and procedural information regarding all aspects of financial management ('Revenue Budget Roles Statement', Accounting Instructions and Financial Regulations) can be found on 'Staffnet' under '[Financial Rules, Guides and Procedures](#)'.

As a Service, GFRS forecasts the overall budget on an annual basis. The forecast budget is submitted to GCC for due consideration with approval given by Cabinet in February each year. The diagram in figure 3 outlines the budget cycle.

## Budget and Strategy Cycle

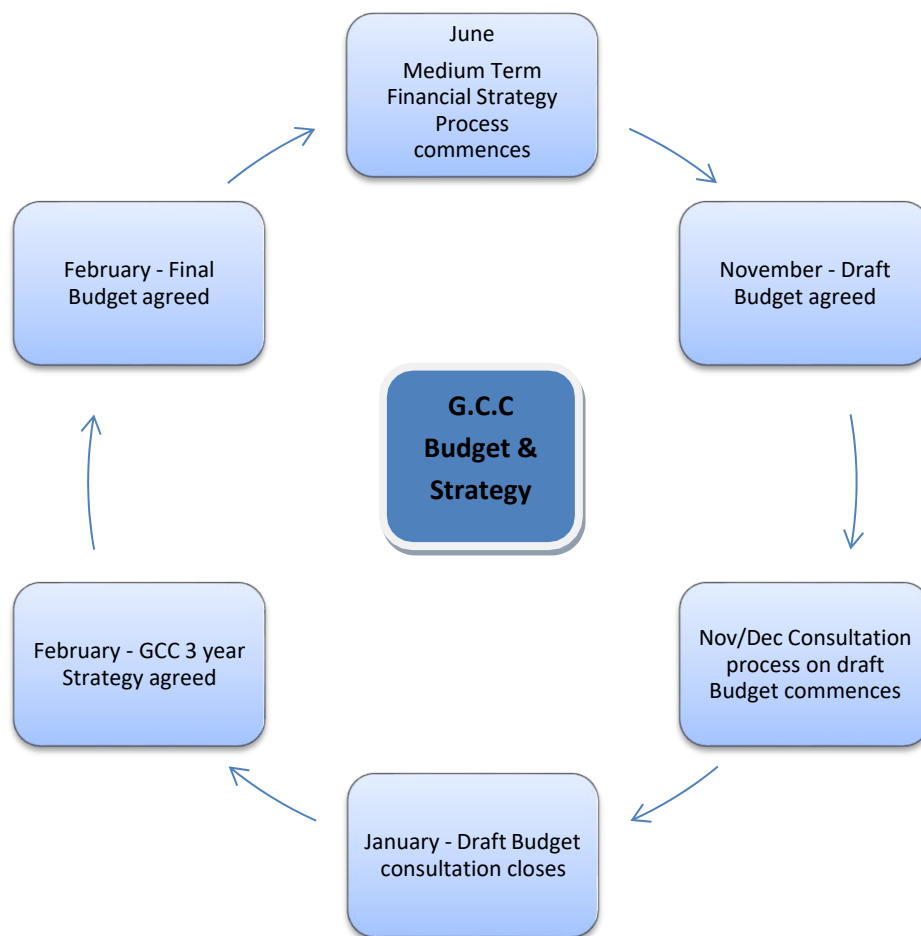


Fig 3

Internally, the Directorate service areas (functions) are allocated their own budget. Each area will have will have:

- An identified **Budget Manager** who has overall responsibility for the management of both the budgets and the budget holders within the services area(s) under their control
- A nominated **Budget Holder** who is responsible for the management of the cost centre(s) under their control.

The primary 'tool' used across GCC as a whole for financial management and reporting is the 'SAP' system. Those with financial responsibilities assigned to their role will need to be fully conversant with the system and the various financial management modules and processes.

**Note:** In all cases, it is imperative that those with responsibility for financial management irrespective of role are in receipt of specific training to undertake the function.

GFRS ensure oversight, financial prudence and due diligence are applied internally through the monthly **Financial Management Group (FMG)** meetings.

- **Procurement arrangements**

All GFRS employees must follow GCC Financial Regulations, Standing Orders, the Council's Purchasing Guide, Contract Guidance Manual (when appropriate) and Accounting Instructions whenever any goods or services are purchased.

Employees may not order, in the name of GFRS or the Council, equipment or goods, whether with a discount or not, from official suppliers for their own personal use even if the cost is reimbursed in full to the Council.

In general terms, the information in figure 4 below must be followed when considering procurement options.

	Contract value	Goods & Services GCC standing order requirements	Works Standing order requirements	Advertise new opportunity to Contracts Finder?	Explanations	Publish award decision on contracts finder?	Publish on ProContract Contract Register?	More information to help
	Type A OJEU+ B £75k-OJEU C £15-75k D £ 0-15k			All open opportunities over £25k should be published via Contracts Finder.		All contract award decisions over £25k to be published via Contracts Finder	All contracts with a value of over £5k to be published on the ProContract Contract Register for duration of contract.	
1	£0-4,999	Single written quote  Type D procurement	Three written quotes	No		No	No	CLOSED event
2	£5,000 to £25,000	Quick quote sent to selected suppliers  Below £15k - Single written quote (Type D)  £15k-£25K three written quotes (Type C)	Three written quotes	No	Quick Quote on ProContract	No	Yes. Obligatory over £5k	Based on the total (estimated) value of your contract – this includes extensions and any ongoing support costs.
3	£25,000 to £75,000	Quick quote sent to selected suppliers  £25k-£75k three written quotes sent to selected suppliers (Closed Event) (Type C)  £25k - £75k if an OPEN competition (need to advertise as no selected suppliers available) (Type C)	Below £250k - three written quotes	No if quotation. No if Works and three quotes  Using quick quote means is a CLOSED EVENT and not advertised publicly to any supplier	If you are obtaining quotations it is not regarded as advertising and our Contract Standing Orders limit for this is £75k	Yes  Because it is over £25k	Yes. Obligatory over £5k	Based on the total (estimated) value of your contract – this includes extensions and any ongoing support costs.
4	£75,000 to EU threshold (£164,176)	Tender required  Type B procurement	£250k- £4,104k tender required	Yes	You need to advertise these opportunities as per our Contract Standing Orders	Yes	Yes. Obligatory over £5k	You can advertise an opportunity on Contract Finder from within ProContract - event and form to complete.  Based on the total (estimated) value of your contract – this includes extensions and any ongoing support costs.
5	Above EU threshold:  Goods and services: £164,176  Works: £4,104,394	Tender process  Type A procurement	Above £4,104k tender required	Yes	You need to advertise these opportunities as per our Contract Standing Orders .	Yes	Yes. Obligatory over £5k	You can advertise an opportunity on TED (OJEU) and Contract Finder from within ProContract - event and form to complete.  Based on the total (estimated) value of your contract – this includes extensions and any ongoing support costs. OJEU (TED) = Yes OJEU (TED) contract award notice = Yes

Guidance issued: January 2016 Advertising Criteria for Procurement



Fig 4

Further advice, information and assistance in relation to procurement can be sought from **GCC Strategic Procurement** and where appropriate, copies of the Procurement Guidance should be issued to those staff that are or become involved in purchasing supplies and services.

When procuring ICT systems or using providers that will store, use or manage personal data the [Cyber and Information Management \(Procurement\) Policy](#) will apply.

- **Performance Management**

By observing and reviewing performance across all areas of service delivery, the Directorate can maintain and improve its ability to manage risks across the organisation. Learning from experience through the use of audits, monitoring and performance reviews, supports the ethos of a learning organisation focused on continuous improvement and ensures delivery of an efficient and effective service which is 'value for money' in real terms.

Directorate performance monitoring is undertaken by the Senior Leadership Team. In addition, quarterly reports of a 'core data set' are monitored by Gloucestershire County Council's CLT, Cabinet and the Adult and Social Care and Communities Scrutiny Committee. A mix of nationally accepted performance indicators coupled with local targets are used to track progress and monitor trends.

Senior managers from across the Directorate will provide the primary source of internal assurance; it is also expected that assurances will be available from a wide range of external sources, including corporate assessments (GCC Internal Audit), inspections (HMICFRS) and external audit (through the annual audit of GCC accounts (Grant Thornton) and value for money opinion).

In addition, we also aim to draw upon audits carried out by other agencies and the application of specific diagnostic tools.

Reporting is through the governance structure (in line with the Annual Planning and Performance Management Cycle - sect 4.2.2), which ultimately delivers the transparency aspect of corporate governance.

#### 4.2.3 Governance Bodies

- **Assurance Mechanisms**

The following table outlines external assurance mechanisms that are designed to aid performance management and provide accountability for the organisation:

Body	Title	Purpose	Frequency
Gloucestershire County Council	County Council	Setting Council the budget and policy framework	6 times a year
	<a href="#">Cabinet</a>	Cabinet is accountable for the delivery of services, for taking key decisions and for implementation of the Council's priorities, within the budget and policy framework.	Meets 8-10 times a year, but Individual Cabinet Members can also take decisions between meetings
	<a href="#">Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee</a>	Strategic overview of performance, budget, risk management and service improvement. Strategic overview of council services including cross-cutting scrutiny in consultation with the other committees.	Bi-monthly



	<a href="#"><u>Adult and Social Care and Communities Scrutiny Committee</u></a>	<p>Carry out the overview and scrutiny functions of the County Council delivering the roles set out in Article 8 of the Constitution in the context of matters relating to portfolio specific services:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The fire and rescue service, emergency management, trading standards, registration service and coroners (Note: not an exhaustive list)</li> </ul>	Bi-monthly
	Lead Cabinet Members	Responsible for Portfolio specific services. Individual cabinet members can take non-key decisions and (under exceptional circumstances) key decisions.	Bi-Monthly meetings, but should be kept informed throughout
	Corporate Leadership Team	Responsible for day-to-day delivery of the Corporate Strategy and Council Services. Approval of strategy and strategic decision reports prior to them being presented to Cabinet or Cabinet Members	Monthly
	Audit & Governance Committee	Providing independent assurance to the Council of the risk management framework and governance/control environment of the Council	
	Business Case Assurance Group	<p>The main aims of the Business Case Assurance Group:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To provide a governance overview of the adequacy and effectiveness of commissioning, procurement and contract management arrangements.</li> <li>To ensure that prior to any decision to make a financial commitment to a third party a clear business rationale exists, that options including de-commissioning and collaboration have been assessed, and, where an external procurement is proposed, a procurement strategy is in place.</li> <li>To ensure that the Council as a whole is positioned to secure optimum value for money, manages its external supply risk and achieves its desired service outcomes; and</li> <li>To provide Council/COMT with an overview of the performance of all commercial activity to support achievement of corporate objectives.</li> </ul> <p>Commercial Assurance Board is not a decision-making body, rather one that provides specialist advice and assurance.</p>	Monthly
	Commissioning Board	The key decision-making body for commercial and other commissioning projects, and will (as currently) review projects at key stages of their life-cycle.	Monthly
	Challenge Board	Provides independent challenge on significant issues, directing its attention mainly at a pre-project stage.	Monthly

	Digital Board	Oversight and approval of all ICT and digital related expenditure prior to formal decision-making processes	
	Information Board	<p>Develops and oversees the council's approach to information &amp; data strategy, governance, security and information access legislation.</p> <p>Its purpose is to provide understanding across the organisation of responsibilities regarding information management, governance and security to maximise compliance and reduce the associated risks to the council.</p>	Quarterly
	<a href="#">Internal Audit</a>	<p>Routine audits - a series of regular reviews of the various financial systems. These are a mixture of establishment audits (schools, social care day centres, highways divisions etc.) and central system reviews (e.g. looking at the corporate creditor payments system).</p> <p>Ad hoc reviews of specific systems - where the approach is not just to ensure compliance with financial regulations but to comment on the overall efficiency of the system and to suggest improvements.</p> <p>Irregularity investigations - to investigate any suspicions or allegations of misuse of Council monies. Auditors will establish the facts of the case, which may be used to institute disciplinary proceedings. Details of the investigation may also be passed to the police if fraud has been identified.</p>	Scheduled and Ad-hoc
	<a href="#">External Audit</a>	<p>The independent examination of the activities and accounts of local authorities.</p> <p>A local authority external auditor not only comments on the accuracy of accounts but also has a role in encouraging efficiency and effectiveness in the use of resources through value for money studies.</p>	Annual

<b>HMICFRS</b>	<a href="#">Inspection</a>	<p>Assessment and reporting on the efficiency, effectiveness and leadership of the 45 fire &amp; rescue services in England.</p> <p>Inspections can be whole-service or thematic.</p> <p>Strong focus on operational competence and the service provided to the public.</p>	Annual / Ad-Hoc
<b>Local Government Association</b>	<a href="#">Fire Peer Challenge</a>	<p>Operational Assessment and Fire Peer Challenge:</p> <p>Operational Assessment provides an opportunity for Fire and Rescue Authorities to assess themselves across a number of key aspects of service provision.</p> <p>Fire Peer Challenge allows FRAs to access independent input to support improvement, focusing on areas the FRA has identified as particularly seeking the input of peers.</p> <p>*May be superseded by HMICFRS inspections in the future.</p>	Every 3 – 5 years
<b>CSD</b>	Benchmarking	<p>Home Office – UK Fire Statistics Monitor</p> <p>CIPFA – Comparative financial data</p> <p>NFCC – family group benchmarking against fire and rescue services of similar size and demographics</p>	Annual
<b>Opinion Research Services Ltd</b>	Customer Satisfaction Survey	Independent surveys undertaken at the request of GFRS.	Ad-hoc
<b>Public</b>	Post Incident Feedback	Returns made via 'After the Fire' questionnaire.	Ad- hoc
<b>Public</b>	Complaints	Independent submissions from the public to the Service.	Ad- hoc

- **Internal Assurance Mechanisms**

The following table outlines internal assurance mechanisms designed to aid performance management and provide accountability for the organisation:

Level	Title	Purpose	Frequency
<b>Strategic</b>	Senior Leadership Team	Governance, strategy and decision making	Monthly
	Portfolio Management Board	Agrees projects and work streams and provides continuous monitoring and a robust performance management framework to ensure progress is made. Where progress is stalled the board will be responsible for providing resources or removing barriers to ensure priority work is delivered on time.	Monthly
	Financial Monitoring Group	Financial oversight and scrutiny Budget monitoring	Monthly
	Rep Bodies Level 2 (Strategic)	Oversight and scrutiny for Level 1 decisions where formal agreement cannot be reached. Governance and appeals	Ad- hoc
	Partnership Meetings	Initial agreement (MOU) and governance arrangements	Various
	Contract Management	Management meeting - performance management Liaison meeting – Contract governance and oversight	Monthly Quarterly
	Information Exchange	Horizon scanning / situational awareness / groundtruth	Weekly
	Business Continuity Management Plans	Plans to continue operations if the organisation is affected by different levels of disaster, which can be, localized short term events, days long organisation wide problems, or a permanent loss of a facility/function.  Provision of these plans addresses a requirement under the <a href="#">Civil Contingencies Act</a> (2004).  BCM plans should be regularly reviewed and routinely tested.	n/a
<b>Tactical</b>	Partnership Meetings	Operational management and performance monitoring	Various
	Senior Managers Forum	Situational awareness / workforce governance / thematic or topic based discussions  Knowledge and information exchange; dissemination of operational learning.	Monthly
	Rep Bodies Level 1 (Tactical)	Discussion consultation, negotiation, agreement.  Day to day interface between organisation and rep bodies to consider issues affecting terms and conditions of the workforce.	Monthly
	Operational Performance Improvement Group	Ensure the safety of all operational personnel in an incident and training context.  To promote and maintain a high level of operational assurance.	Bi-monthly
	Health & Safety Improvement Group	Instigating, developing and carrying out measures to secure the health, safety and welfare at work of all employees	Bi-monthly

Level	Title	Purpose	Frequency
Operational	Team Meetings	Ensure day to day delivery of objectives and projects to meet organisational strategy	Weekly / Monthly
	EDI Group	Development and sharing of organisation culture and values	Quarterly
	Hazmat Officers Group	Horizon scanning, monitoring and review of SOP's and sharing / dissemination of good practice	Quarterly
	Fire Investigation Officers Group		6 monthly
	Water Incident Managers		Ad-hoc
	N-ILO Officers Group		Ad-hoc
	Operational Assurance	<p>Operational Assurance is a safety management system, underpinned by the key "Safe Person Principles" and the 'Safer Firefighter Programme' that aims to support delivery of a safe, effective and efficient operational response. It assures the effectiveness of GFRS arrangements in the implementation of policy, process and procedure measured against recognised fire and rescue service standards.</p> <p>The four key elements of Operational Assurance are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Station Self Audit</li> <li>Targeted &amp; Key Skill Audits</li> <li>Organisational Learning Audits (OLF's)</li> <li>Post Incident Operational Debriefs.</li> </ul>	Continuous

### 4.2.3 Monitoring, Recording and Reporting

- **GCC Annual Governance Statement**

The Directorate provides an **Annual Governance Statement** covering the internal control framework operating within the directorate.

- **Fire and Rescue National Framework for England (2018)**

GFRS provides a **Statement of Assurance** (incorporating a Statement of Accounts) demonstrating that the service has fulfilled its obligations under the framework.

The communications / feedback loop (governance and assurance) is shown below in figure 5.



Fig 5

- **Annual Business Plan**

Data and statistics aligned to identified targets within the Annual Business Plan are collected and collated by GFRS and reported to GCC via the '**In-phase**' system and to SLT on a quarterly basis.

- **Financial Reporting**

The primary 'tool' used across GCC for financial management and reporting is the '**SAP**' system. (See financial management under Sect 4.2.2).

- **Project Management**

Information and data regarding major projects is recorded, up-dated and monitored via GCC's Inphase and '**Verto**' systems; reporting is to the Portfolio Office within Planning, Performance and Change, and the respective Service Head / Director of Service.

- **Business/Team Plans**

Nominated Lead Officers periodically report progress against identified work-streams to SLT for oversight / monitoring against the Annual Business Plan.

- **Personal Development Reviews (PDR's)**

IPP's are designed to be a continuous process enabling managers and staff to discuss and review openly their role and performance in helping the Service and Council achieve stated priorities outlined in respective business plans.

Appraisals are conducted on an annual basis with an interim review undertaken at 6 months as a minimum.

- **Training and Development**

The **PDR-pro** system is utilised by individuals, line managers and the Learning and Development Team in order to capture information regarding individual training and development.

- **Human Resource Management**

Human resource management and monitoring is undertaken via the Resilience and Day Staff Rotas' alongside Gartan; issue reporting is via SAP and Gartan (Payroll / absence management) by line managers and RIVO (Near Miss / Accidents) by line managers and investigating officers.

- **Incident Information**

Incident data and statistics are collected and reported via:

- The '**IRS**' system (national tool)
- The '**Datahub**' (local tool)
- Fortek BOSS (incident log and communications)

With the exception of IRS, which is completed between Fire Control and the Incident Commander of an incident, all other information and statistical data regarding incidents is captured by Fire Control.