

Performance Management Unit

Performance Management Framework

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South Wales
Fire and Rescue Service



Gwasanaeth Tân ac Achub
De Cymru

Raising Awareness - Reducing Risk

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1. Introduction

This report sets out a Corporate Performance Management Framework for the South Wales Fire and Rescue Service (SWFRS). It is acknowledged that the development of an effective performance management framework is a long-term commitment; improving and embedding a system can take several years, requiring constant attention and regular reviews. SWFRS is committed at the highest level to implementing and fully embedding a successful framework.

The overall framework consists of the following key constituent elements:

- An integrated planning framework
- A performance measurement framework that addresses management information including performance indicators, standards, improvement targets and actions to ensure continuous improvement and better quality service delivery.
- An appraisal system that provides links between the planning framework and individual improvement targets for all staff.
- A risk management framework that identifies business risks and actions to manage or mitigate.
- A monitoring framework to ensure that all targets and action plans are effectively delivered.
- Integration of the requirements and principles of the Wales Programme for Improvement, as updated by the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2009.

The diagram on the next page summarises the framework and the inter relationship between the various elements.

In response to an increasing expectation of public accountability, Fire and Rescue Authorities in line with local authorities have been required to publish performance information. The Best Value framework reinforced this requirement and introduced the need for a comprehensive system of performance measurement, management and review.

Since devolution of the Welsh Fire and Rescue services to the Welsh Assembly Government in 2004, the Best Value legislation no longer statutorily applies to South Wales Fire and Rescue Service and has now been replaced by the Wales Programme for Improvement, which was updated by the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2009.

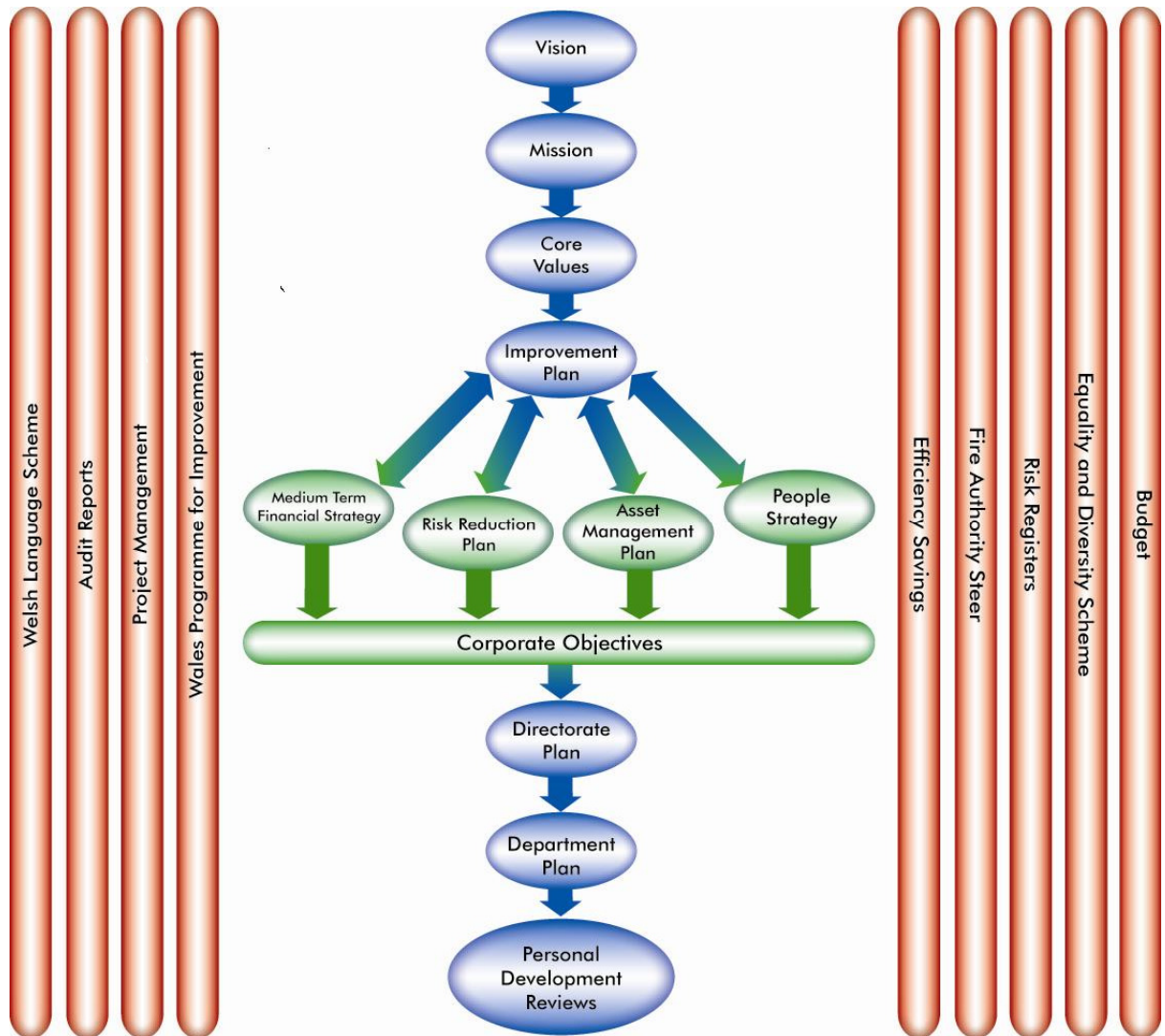


Diagram 1 - South Wales Fire and Rescue Service – Performance Management Framework.

2. The Principles of Performance Management

2.1 *What is performance management?*

Performance management is a key tool for delivering better outcomes to users. There are various definitions used but put simply it is taking action in response to actual performance to make outcomes for the communities we serve better than they would otherwise have been.

This enables us to improve and maintain good performance. It involves gathering reliable information about our performance and understanding / addressing performance issues at every level within the organisation from each individual member of staff to the Fire & Rescue Authority (FRA) itself.

There are 7 key stages to our approach:

1. Agreeing our **aims** and objectives
2. **Planning** what needs to be done
3. **Doing** it
4. **Checking and monitoring** performance information and identifying opportunities for improvement;
5. **Reviewing** what has gone well, not so well;
6. **Acting** on the information and making any necessary changes;
7. **Reporting** progress and outcomes

This can be summarised as the **plan-do-review-revise** cycle or the **continuous cycle of improvement** as demonstrated in the following diagram.



Diagram 2 – plan-do-review-revise cycle.

Performance management is essentially about being clear about objectives for the organisation, how progress on objectives will be measured, agreeing on specific actions to achieve the objectives, implementing these and reviewing the result or impact.

The corporate objectives for SWFRS are regularly revisited and reviewed, they set the basis for how we will achieve our Vision and Mission.

Our Vision

To make our communities the safest places to live, work and visit.

Our Mission

In order to achieve our vision we will:

- *ensure all of our communities are aware of the risks*
- *work with partners to reduce the risks*
- *target our services according to need; and*
- *give and excellent and rapid response when our services are required in order to save and protect.*

These are underpinned by our Core Values of

- Service to the community
- People
- Diversity and
- Improvement

These values determine how things are done within the organisation, how we treat our customers, how we work with our external partners, and how, as individuals and within departments, we work together to achieve our shared objectives.

Managing performance is not rocket science. It is about practical ways of improving the way we do things within SWFRS. Its only purpose is to deliver better quality services to local people.

2.2 What are the Benefits of Performance Management?

Performance management provides the following benefits:

For the customer/citizen:

- Provides services which are continuously improving.
- Provides services which meets the needs of users.
- Makes SWFRS more accountable to the communities it serves.
- Provides a basis for effective communication.

For the Organisation:

- Identifies corporate priorities and ensures everyone is working together and focusing on achieving them.
- Develops an understanding of staff and Member training needs.
- Ensures work is achieved on time to agreed standards and with the resources and skills needed.
- Provides evidence of continuous improvement.
- Improves decision-making.
- Improves morale.

For the FRA Members

- Members can become fully engaged in the work of all sections of the organisation and receive timely briefing on performance issues.
- The opportunity to monitor and question performance.

For Employees

- Provides clarity and understanding of where each individual contributes to the vision and direction of the department.
- Increases job satisfaction, pride and self-esteem by clarifying roles, targets and achievements.
- Offers opportunity for learning and development.

2.3 Systems and culture

There are two main elements of performance management, namely;

- **Systems:** the framework that supports performance management on a regular, on-going basis, including elements such as plans, strategies, policies and objectives.
- **Culture:** people continually wanting to improve, *using* the systems not being *led* by them.

Effective performance management happens when the necessary management systems are complemented by an environment, or organisational culture, that focuses on community aspirations and encourages and nurtures performance improvement through innovation, therefore it is important that all staff at SWFRS fully understand and utilise the performance management framework.

3. Performance Management at SWFRS

3.1 *The Service's Performance Management Framework*

Performance management is important to SWFRS. The performance management framework concentrates on a variety of key tools:

- a. A planning framework
- b. A performance management culture
- c. Information management systems
- d. Performance monitoring
- e. Integration of risk and performance management
- f. An annual Improvement Assessment

a) The Planning Framework

There is a direct link between the Risk Reduction Plan, Directorate Plans, Department/Station Plans and Personal Development and Review Plans – objectives and targets are cascaded down from one level to the next. There is also the opportunity through the annual planning process and continual review and monitoring by all staff, for ideas for improvement and developments to feed back up through the planning framework.

The Risk Reduction Plan (RRP)

Our key strategic plan is the Risk Reduction Plan, this plan is designed to reduce fire and road traffic collision risks in the South Wales area for residents, businesses and visitors. It provides the strategic direction for the organisation; it is the overarching plan that governs everything that SWFRS does. It identifies key strategic objectives and outlines a series of pro-active initiatives targeting risks in both domestic and non-domestic settings.

The Improvement Plan

The Improvement Plan presents where the Service's wants to be in the future and its overall picture of continuous improvement in a clear and concise way. This plan will present to citizens, communities, businesses and stakeholders a comprehensive picture on the objectives of the service, the Service's performance over the previous year and proposals to be implemented in the current and forthcoming financial year. The statutory publication date is before 31st October each year, from 2011 the Risk Reduction Plan and the Improvement Plan will be merged into one document.

Directorate Plans

In order to deliver our corporate objectives and initiatives outlined in the RRP, each Director is responsible for developing and continually monitoring a directorate plan.

Directorate plans draw on the RRP and specify the tactics that will be adopted across the directorate to achieve the corporate objectives and

any other action to improve service delivery. The directorate plan forms the basis for the department and station business plans.

Directorate plans also provide the vehicle for each area of the organisation to outline the efficiency gains that they will make over the following twelve months and to identify action that they will take in support of key corporate strategies and priorities, for example equalities, sustainability and welsh language.

Department and Station Business Plans

Department and Station Plans are the prime planning documents under the Directorate Plan, each Head of Service, or Station Commander is responsible for developing and monitoring their own plan.

They are a key building block in the performance management framework; they identify how each service will contribute towards achieving the aims and objectives as set out in the RRP.

The plans are a management tool for all department managers and station commanders to use on a day-to-day basis to ensure that their service area is operating effectively and efficiency. Plans are working documents that should be monitored and adjusted throughout the year as circumstances change.

Integrated Personal Development System (IPDS)

In order to support the planning process, there is an appraisal system with regular setting and review of targets and objectives, along with the identification of employee development requirements.

As part of the IPDS, the Personal Development and Review System (PDRS) ensures formally that staff have sufficient skills and knowledge to carry out their current job role and assists line managers with their responsibility to ensure that their team members are motivated, skilled and reaching their full potential. It also gives individuals the option to discuss any further development opportunities that could assist their career, or simply ensure that they are more fulfilled in their current role.

The IPDS for all staff ensures that their development is catered for throughout their careers. Some people will want development to be better able to carry out their role, whereas others may wish to progress to the next role or to a specialist role. It is a system that allows for individuals to have their development catered for with regard taken of their personal needs.

b) A performance management culture

Performance Measurement

Performance measurement is simply the collection, collation and reporting of information on how the Service is performing on specified criteria. It is retrospective identifying past performance. Performance measurement can help organisations improve performance by

identifying good practice and opportunities to learn from others. It can also ensure that the organisation is focused on its key priorities, and that areas of poor performance are investigated.

Performance Management

Performance measurement alone achieves nothing, to be effective the Service must use performance measurement to assist improvement by ensuring it informs the decision making process. This involves using what has been learnt from the measurement process to identify what needs to be done or what needs to be done better. This leads to more effective strategic and operational management and delivers continuous improvement – this is performance management.

c) Information management systems

A performance management framework requires effective information management systems to support the process. This does not necessarily mean IT systems, but given the benefits of IT in collecting, storing and processing information it usually does. At SWFRS, it is the responsibility of the owner of the PI to ensure that the appropriate management system is developed to collect and validate the information needed to measure each PI.

Performance Indicators Management System (OWLe)

A computer based Performance Indicator Management System; OWLe has been developed to provide regular and better management information.

The database contains all the information relating to individual indicators including current and past performance, targets and information about who collects the data, how it is reported and to whom, and the indicator definitions.

This is a management tool and is not available publicly, although the information that it generates is published in the Improvement Plan. The system enables the collection of all statutory and local performance indicators from directorates, departments and stations and automatically generates reports on various levels. This allows all users to examine performance indicators relevant to their specific areas.

How is the performance information collected?

The Performance Management and Statistics Unit act as the focal point for collating performance information and for producing the various reports that are required for the monitoring processes. Everyone within the SWFRS can access the OWLe system and some departments have responsibility for inputting their own data.

d) Performance monitoring

Robust monitoring is a key tool to the achievement of a performance management culture. In particular, for a performance management framework to be successful the management and review of

performance needs to be exercised at all levels of the Service from the Fire and Rescue Authority to every individual.

Performance information is used to improve the day-to-day operation of services across SWFRS. Reported performance, which is below expectation, is targeted and analysed so that remedial actions can be introduced, lessons learnt and improvements made.

Performance Monitoring within SWFRS

SWFRS' performance management framework is monitored by its elected Members via the Finance, Audit and Performance Management Committee (FAPM), the Executive Leadership Team (ELT) and the Senior Management Team (SMT).

All indicators in the Improvement Plan are 'cascaded' down to the directorate and departmental plans, each is owned by an individual directorate. Local indicators have also been developed for operational and managerial purposes. These are all reported in directorate / departmental plans, where previous performance against targets is shown together with future targets. SWFRS has a target setting methodology based on trends and tolerance bands, which provides a consistent approach to measuring and monitoring of performance.

Overall performance against targets set out in the Improvement Plan is reported upon annually to the elected Members as part of the process of compiling the following year's Improvement Plan.

In addition quarterly reports are produced throughout the year; these outline progress in achieving targets set against the statutory performance indicators. Each Director is responsible for reporting on the activities their directorate is undertaking to achieve the target and any remedial action required where performance is below the anticipated target. Other improvement actions being completed in Directorates are also reported on; for example towards achieving corporate objectives or to manage corporate risks.

The PMU collates the report and check the actual performance against target for each indicator. The end of year projection will be colour co-ordinated dependant on the following performance levels: -

Green	Target achieved or surpassed
Yellow	Target not achieved but performance same as or improved over previous year
Red	Target not achieved and performance declined over previous year

This report is submitted to SMT and then to the FAPM for scrutiny and comments.

In addition to performance indicators the PMU maintains a database of actions arising from all audits and corporate schemes. All actions have a time frame and a responsible officer identified, that officer reports regularly on progress and advises when the action has been successfully completed. The PMU manages the databases to ensure that update reports are regularly received and that the information contained on the database is current and accurate.

e) Integration of Risk and Performance Management

The Corporate Risk Register identifies and scores all risks relating to the delivery of SWFRS' corporate objectives, actions and initiatives. These are identifiable risks that may prevent the organisation from achieving the aims and objectives set out in the RRP. It can also include opportunities that present themselves to SWFRS as a result of the activities that will or could be carried out in order to achieve the aims and objectives set out in the plan.

The risk management strategy is intrinsically linked with the business planning framework. Directorate, department and station plans all identify the risks that relate to their objectives and any additional actions needed to control the risk. Higher level risks identified are escalated to the Corporate Risk Register.

PMU centrally manage the Corporate Risk Register and monitors risk actions, ensuring that risk owners are identified and notified of all actions outstanding against them and regular progress reports issued.

f) Annual Assessment

The Wales Programme for Improvement

The Wales Programme for Improvement (WPI) was initially introduced for Local Authorities in Wales in 2002 as a new approach to seeking best value in services. It is a risk-based approach to improvement with the underlying objective being to achieve the delivery of high quality services to the public that meet identified local needs.

Following the devolvement of the Fire and Rescue Services in Wales, WPI has been introduced for Fire Authorities from 2007, therefore it is a statutory requirement to embrace and embed the principles of continuous improvement throughout the organisation. WPI was updated by the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2009 which, along with other requirements places a general duty of continuous improvement upon the Service.

Improvement Assessment

The Wales Audit Office will annual undertake the following **Corporate Assessment** – a forward-looking assessment of an FRA's likelihood to comply with its duty to make arrangements to secure continuous improvement.

Performance Assessment – a retrospective assessment of whether a FRA has achieved its planned improvements, in order to inform a view as to the FRA's track record of improvement.

Further Information

If you would like any further information on the Performance Management Framework please contact the Performance Management Unit.

The Planning Framework

