SCOTTISH POLICE AUTHORITY
ÙGHDARRAS POILIS NA H-ALBA

Audit, Risk Assurance Committee
13 August 2026

Item 4.1: Best Value Self-Evaluation for Policing
Presenter: Patrick Brown, Chief Strategy Officer
Appendix: Appendix A – Best Value self-evaluation framework
Appendix B – Best Value self-evaluation tool

Purpose

To provide the Best Value self-evaluation framework for policing.

Recommendation

For Discussion

Strategic Alignment

Strategic outcomes (s)	The framework is critical to delivering the Strategic Police Plan for Scotland 2026-2029, Police Scotland's 2030 Vision, SPA Corporate Strategy 2026, Forensics Strategy 2025-2030.
Risk alignment	Strategic risks will provide an important evidence source for carrying out and targeting self-evaluation activity. Self-evaluation results may also inform our assessment of risks.
Prior governance	Police Scotland Audit, Risk and Assurance Board – July 2026 SPA Leadership Team Forensic Services Senior Leadership Team
Stakeholder engagement	HMICS and Audit Scotland

Implications

Community		Data & Privacy		Environmental	
Equalities & Human Rights		Financial	✓	Health, Safety & Wellbeing	✓
Legal		Workforce	✓		

1 Report Detail

1.1 Background

1.2 Recommendation seven from the Best Value in Policing audit requires us to establish a coordinated approach to drive continuous improvement and embed the principles of Best Value in all we do.

1.3 The Best Value improvement plan, presented to the committee in May 2026, outlined that one of the ways we would address recommendation seven was through developing a policing-wide approach to self-evaluation.

1.4 Best Value self-evaluation Framework

1.5 We have designed our Best Value self-evaluation framework for policing (Appendix A) to allow us to identify our strengths and weaknesses, foster accountability, and drive continuous improvement.

1.6 We developed our framework in consultation with internal and external stakeholders, through research and benchmarking with local authorities. We have also developed it from our relative experiences of carrying out Best Value self-evaluation to date.

1.7 The SPA has carried out self-evaluation for several years, assessing itself each year against Best Value guidance for Accountable Officers and applying a RAG status rating. Police Scotland and Forensic Services carried out their first self-evaluation exercises in 2025 in preparation for our Best Value audit. Forensic Services adopted the same methodology as the SPA, whereas Police Scotland's self-evaluation incorporated aspects of more recent Best Value guidance for local authorities (including community engagement) and did not include any explicit scoring or rating.

1.8 Our new policing-wide self-evaluation framework now aligns the three organisations on methodology, self-evaluation criteria, scoring matrix and reporting.

1.9 We have supplemented our framework with a bespoke Best Value self-evaluation tool for policing (Appendix B). This has been designed from statutory Best Value themes and characteristics as well as elements from the European Foundation for Quality Management (EFQM) and Public Sector Improvement Service (PSIF) models. Our tool also includes a revised scoring matrix.

1.10 Across policing we will use our self-evaluation tool flexibly, reflecting our differing roles and responsibilities. Similarly, the way in which we apply self-evaluation each year will differ across SPA, Forensic Services

and Police Scotland due to the relative sizes and complexities of each organisation. We will however work to identify opportunities for joint evaluation and/or follow-up work on policing-wide issues.

1.11 Implementation

1.12 We will use our framework and assessment tool to carry out Best Value self-evaluation exercises across Police Scotland, SPA and Forensics from 2026 onwards. Due to the relatively recent Best Value audit and subsequent improvement planning, SPA, Forensic Services and Police Scotland have agreed to carry out a relatively light touch "health check" evaluation during 2026/27.

1.13 We plan to feed relevant results of our self-evaluation activity this year into our 2027/28 business planning processes. We also plan to present an overarching high-level self-evaluation report for policing to ARAC in early 2027.

1.14 We will begin our programmes of detailed self-evaluation in 2027/28. SPA and Forensic Services will carry out a corporate detailed self-evaluation each year, similar to their previous self-evaluations. Police Scotland will carry out an annual high-level corporate health check evaluation each year. Alongside this it will implement a three-year rolling programme of detailed self-evaluation covering each division/ department/directorate. This rolling programme of detailed self-evaluation will be prioritised based on factors such as risks, performance, priorities and other scrutiny activity. Police Scotland proposes to pilot its detailed self-evaluation approach in one national division/department during 2026. The aim of the pilot is to identify any practical challenges in the process or timescales. This will allow it to make any necessary refinements prior to wider implementation from 2027/2028.

1.15 Review

1.16 As we implement our new self-evaluation framework, we will continually review its practicality and effectiveness. We will keep the committee informed of any proposed amendments to our future approach.

2 Strategic alignment detail

2.1 Strategic alignment to strategic police plan and other key enabling strategies

Strategic outcome (s)	Establishing a coordinated approach to delivering continuous improvement through self-evaluation will be critical to delivering our Strategic Police Plan for Scotland 2026-2029, Police Scotland's 2030 Vision, SPA Corporate Strategy 2026, Forensics Strategy 2025-2030.

2.2 Carrying out regular and robust self-evaluation is a key element of demonstrating Best Value. Being self-aware of our areas for improvement through self-evaluation and putting plans in place to address them will be critical in supporting our delivery of the Strategic Police Plan for Scotland 2026-2029, Police Scotland's 2030 Vision, SPA Corporate Strategy 2026, Forensics Strategy 2025-2030.

2.3 Alignment to risk register and risk appetite

Risk alignment	Strategic risks will provide an important evidence source for carrying out and targeting self-evaluation activity. Self-evaluation results may also inform our assessment of risks.

2.4 Strategic risks will provide an important evidence source for carrying out self-evaluation activity. Self-evaluation results may also provide detailed information that can help inform our assessment of the nature and scale of risks.

2.5 Each year, Police Scotland will carry out a high-level self-evaluation and supplement this with more detailed self-evaluation in specific functions and business areas. Police Scotland's risk register will help inform which functions and business areas are prioritised for evaluation activity.

2.6 Prior governance

Prior governance	Police Scotland Audit, Risk and Assurance Board – July 2026 SPA Leadership Team Forensic Services Senior Leadership Team

2.7 Our policing-wide approach to self-evaluation has been collectively approved by leadership teams in the SPA and Forensic Services and the Audit, Risk and Assurance Board in Police Scotland.

2.8 Stakeholder engagement

Stakeholder engagement	HMICS and Audit Scotland

2.9 We have had initial engagement with HMICS around our proposed approach to self-evaluation. We will continue to engage with HMICS as we carry out and use the results from our self-evaluation exercises.

3 Implications detail

Community		Data & Privacy		Environmental	
Equalities & Human Rights		Financial	✓	Health, Safety & Wellbeing	✓
Legal		Workforce	✓		

3.1 Our self-evaluation exercises will examine all aspects of Best Value.

Appendix A

Best Value self-evaluation framework for policing

July 2026

Why is self-evaluating our performance important?

1. Public sector reform is a priority area for the Scottish Government, set out in Scotland's Public Service Reform Strategy: Delivering for Scotland (June 2025). Their vision is 'a Scotland where everyone has access to services that are efficient, good quality and effective' with Best Value crosscutting the strategy's three pillars, in particular Efficient Services.

2. Among other measures, Policing will use Best Value principles to evidence reform by demonstrating we are continuously improving, leveraging our resources, engaging and collaborating with communities and partners effectively and evidencing outcomes that have improved frontline services, are sustainable and provide value for money.

3. The Police and Fire Reform (Scotland) Act 2012 places a legal obligation on both the Scottish Police Authority (SPA) and the Chief Constable of Police Scotland to "make arrangements which secure Best Value," defined as 'continuous improvement in the performance of their functions'.

4. As a policing system, we are collectively committed to, learning from reflective practice and carrying out regular, robust self-evaluation to embed a culture of continuous improvement. We recognise the importance of embedding continuous improvement to enhance our performance, make best use of our resources and deliver our strategic objectives, and in turn, improve outcomes, enhance public trust and demonstrate Best Value.

5. Across the SPA, Forensic Services and Police Scotland, we had adopted different approaches to how we self-evaluate our performance. In their January 2026 joint audit report on Best Value in Policing, Audit Scotland and His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary Scotland (HMICS) recommended that we adopt a joined-up approach to Best Value self-assessment across policing. The aim of a joint approach is to help us more effectively prioritise our use of resources, deliver change and embed the core principles of Best Value.

6. In response to this recommendation, Police Scotland, the SPA and Forensic Services have jointly developed this common self-evaluation framework for policing.

How have we developed our self-evaluation framework?

7. We have designed our common self-evaluation framework for policing to allow us to identify our strengths and weaknesses, align actions with goals, foster accountability, and drive continuous improvement. We developed it in consultation with internal and external stakeholders, research and benchmarking with local authorities.

8. The Best Value themes and characteristics that we should be looking to evidence in self-evaluation are set out in 2011 statutory guidance for Accountable Officers. More recent Best Value guidance (2020) has been developed for local authorities across Scotland to reflect subsequent legislation that has had a significant impact on Best Value requirements - most notably the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015 strengthened the statutory base for community planning, and for involving and engaging communities in planning and decision-making about things that matter to them.

9. We have selected the themes in our self-evaluation framework to be a hybrid of those set out in statutory guidance, reflecting the key role of policing in communities (Exhibit 1).

What do we want self-evaluation to achieve?

10. By embedding regular and robust self-evaluation we want to drive and evidence continuous improvement in our functions and services.

11. We have designed our corporate approach to self-evaluation to provide individuals, teams and/or multidisciplinary groups with the opportunity to reflect on and assess current practices, processes or workstreams. We want to empower those participating to identify strengths, risks and opportunities to drive continuous improvement in their areas.

Exhibit 1 - Best Value self-evaluation themes

Best Value themes (statutory guidance 2011)	Best Value themes (statutory guidance 2020)	Policing Best Value self-evaluation themes
Vision and leadership	Vision and leadership	**1. Vision and leadership**
Effective partnerships	Partnerships and collaborative working	**2. Working with partners and communities**
	Working with communities	
Governance and accountability	Governance and accountability	**3. Governance and accountability**
Use of resources	Effective use of resources	**4. Effective use of resources**
Performance management		**5. Performance Management**
Equality	Fairness and equality	**6. Equality and diversity**
Sustainability	Sustainability	**7. Environmental sustainability**

How do we self-evaluate?

12. To inform and support a consistent approach to self-evaluation we have developed:

- an annual self-evaluation cycle of activity and reporting;
- an agreed methodology; and
- a bespoke Best Value self-evaluation tool for policing (BV-SET)

Annual self-evaluation cycle

13. The SPA, Forensic Services and Police Scotland will collectively develop and agree annual self-evaluation programmes within each organisation. Programmes will be prioritised, coordinated and where appropriate, adopt a collaborative approach to evaluation.

14. As highlighted in Exhibit 2, we will:

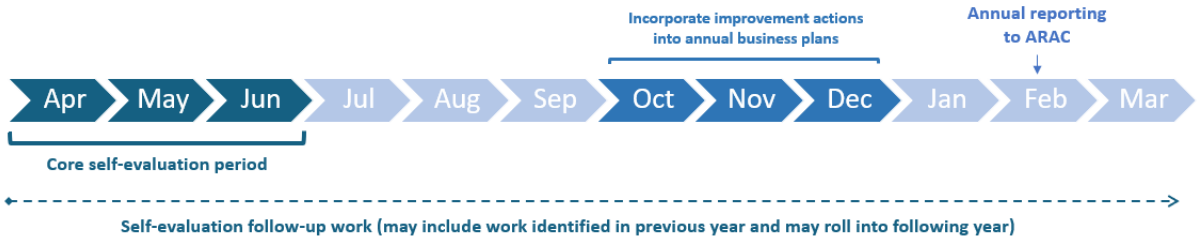
- aim to carry out the bulk of self-evaluation activity between April and September each year. Where SPA, Forensic Services and/or Police Scotland decide to do follow-up, deep dive reviews into any issues or risks identified through self-evaluation, we will time these to fit with available resourcing capacity and to de-conflict with other scrutiny activity, minimising impact on service delivery.

- feed improvement actions identified through self-evaluation into our respective annual business plans.

- report the results of annual assessments along with the following year's plan to Audit Risk Assurance Committee (ARAC) at the end of each financial year.

- incorporate reporting into the annual report and accounts.

Exhibit 2 – annual self-evaluation cycle of activity and reporting



Self-evaluation methodology

15. The stages we will go through in carrying out our self-evaluation are set out in Exhibit 3.

Exhibit 3 – policing approach to self-evaluation

16. Our approach to self-evaluation is designed to be flexible and to be applied at different levels within each of our organisations. We will follow a three-tier approach (Exhibit 4) which will be adaptable to the differences between SPA, Forensic Services and Police Scotland in organisational scale, remit and complexity. Where we identify areas that overlap one or more organisations we will approach them collectively.

Exhibit 4 – tiered approach to self-evaluating

Annual high-level organisational evaluation*	Annually, we may carry out a high-level organisational self-evaluation or 'health check'. This will comprise a survey of a selection of employees, along with an evaluation of progress against improvement actions from previous self-evaluations.
Detailed evaluations*	Each organisation will use annual 'health check' survey results along with other information from risk management, performance information, scrutiny findings, internal reviews or stakeholder feedback to carry out detailed self-evaluations. Differences in scale between the SPA, Forensic Services and Police Scotland mean coverage of detailed evaluations will vary (for example, may cover the whole organisation, focus areas or themes) and will be tailored in a proportionate way by each organisation.
Follow-up reviews	Self-evaluation programmes may potentially drive additional review work to examine certain areas, themes or risks in more detail (often referred to as deep dives). The need for and type of follow-up reviews will be influenced by other improvement and scrutiny activity.

*In the SPA and Forensic Services annual high-level organisational evaluations and detailed evaluations will typically be combined into a single organisational-wide process. A different approach will typically be adopted by Police Scotland due to scale.

17. Self-evaluation should be carried out in line with the principles set out in Exhibit 5.

Exhibit 5 – self-evaluation principles

Conducted effectively, our self-evaluation will:

- identify our strengths, giving recognition of progress for everyone.
- identify areas for improvement and give a sound basis for action.
- involve officers and staff at different levels and business areas, encouraging shared learning and diversity of thought.
- provide a coordinated and consistent evaluation of the organisation.
- identify and disseminate useful knowledge and experiences.
- provide a year-on-year comparison of performance and offer the potential for benchmarking with other organisations.

Conducting self-evaluation should provide:

- an honest and holistic view of the organisation.
- better officer and staff awareness of the way in which we and/or our partnerships work.
- clear officer and staff ownership of improvements.
- value and create continuous improvement, collaboration, trust and teamwork.
- insight into enhancing impact or resilience.

Self-evaluation is **NOT**

- a competition, points-scoring exercise, ‘blame game’, punitive measure or way to improve individual or departmental image.
- to be used to criticise, but used positively to help reflect, promote awareness, and agree priorities for improvement.
- a review of the people working in the organisation; it is about the way the organisation and its partnerships work.

Best Value self-evaluation tool (BV-SET)

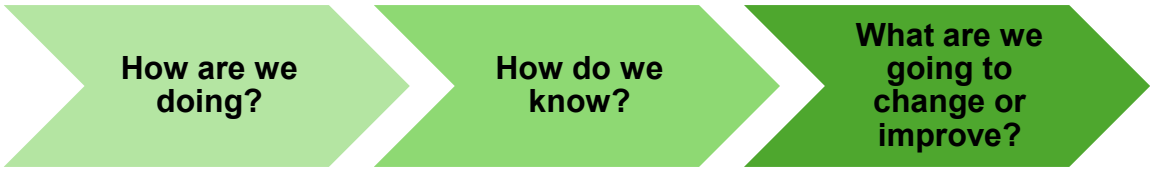
18. When carrying out self-evaluation, individuals and teams should use our Best Value self-evaluation tool (BV-SET). We have developed this bespoke approach to suit the needs of policing. It contains 40 statements across the seven Best Value themes set out in Exhibit 1 above. It incorporates statutory Best Value guidance as well as elements from the European Foundation for Quality Management (EFQM) and Public Sector Improvement Service (PSIF) models.

19. Due to differences in the roles of the SPA, Forensic Services and Police Scotland, not all statements in our BV-SET will apply to each organisation or business areas.

20. We will use the BV-SET to form an initial high-level view of performance across the services we provide, based on existing documentation. It will enable us to identify broad strengths and areas requiring improvement by using the evidence we gather in day-to-day work and service delivery. It will also help drive continuous improvement across all three organisations.

Applying the BV-SET

21. When carrying out self-evaluation, we should consider three key questions when making an assessment against each statement in the BV-SET:



How are we doing?

22. We should consider the impact of our work and how it serves or supports our colleagues, stakeholders, and communities. This will allow us to assess if our services are appropriate (based on need), high quality (in line with best practice), in need of review and improvement, or have been improved by change and adaptation.

How do we know how we are doing?

23. Assessments of how we are doing should be supported by appropriate evidence. We may draw on both quantitative evidence, i.e. things that can be measured, (for example performance against timescales, risks, etc.) and qualitative evidence, i.e. non-numerical evidence that captures things like insights, perceptions and experiences (for example, feedback from users, audit recommendations, etc).

24. Potential evidence has been suggested for each statement in the BV-SET, but you may find a range of other evidence that supports your assessment, for example:

- performance data and trends (KPI's, milestones, etc.),
- documentation (risks, policies, records, decisions, forums, strategies etc.),
- consultation of users, non-users and staff (survey results etc.), or
- direct observation of practice (case studies, scrutiny reports, compliance with regulations and legislation etc.).

25. The volume, weight and impact of evidence will determine self-evaluation scores in our analysis and consensus sessions.

What are we going to change or improve?

26. As the self-evaluation progresses, we will begin to identify areas of strength and areas for improvement:

- Strengths should be celebrated, shared and continuously reviewed.
- Areas for change and/or improvement will require discussion, agreement and prioritisation.

27. Self-evaluation is designed to systematically identify actions that will result in improvement. These actions will feed into our business planning processes (annual plans / business plan etc.) as well as transformation projects, risk management, policy refresh, and/or improvement plans at all levels. It is critical that we monitor our improvement actions effectively to make sure that they make a difference to how we work.

How do we score our performance?

28. We have developed a scoring method to allow us to determine where we are along the following six-point scale (Exhibit 6).

Exhibit 6 –self-evaluation scoring criteria

Not there	Beginning	Partial	Established	Strength	Advanced
Not there or not been considered	We have started developing / it is operating in a basic way	We have this in place but not consistently or everywhere	Works well and done reliably and consistently	We are good at this but could still improve	Recognised as leaders in this area. Best practice is shared beyond the organisation.

**There will also be an option for 'Not Applicable' as some statements will not apply to all areas in all three organisations.

Applying self-evaluation in SPA, Forensic Services and Police Scotland

29. The SPA, Forensic Services and Police Scotland will each determine how they most appropriately apply this self-evaluation framework in practice. This will be outlined in separate guidance where appropriate.

Ensuring our approach to self-evaluation remains relevant

30. We will build organisational learning into our self-evaluation process by annually reviewing our self-evaluation framework, accompanying BV-SET and the methods we use to carry out follow-up reviews, to ensure they remain relevant and produce useful outputs. We will compile feedback and learning from each self-evaluation exercise and refine and refresh the process as appropriate.

Best Value - Corporate Self-Evaluation

Overview

Welcome to the Best Value Self-Evaluation Tool (BV-SET) developed for Policing.

After the comprehensive best value audit conducted in 2025 by Audit Scotland and HMICS, there is an expectation by external stakeholders that we continue to evaluate ourselves as an organisation to identify strengths, and areas for improvement against the best value principles.

Bet Value provides a common framework for continuous improvement in public services in Scotland, and is a key foundation of the Scottish Government's Public Service Reform agenda. The BV-SET reinforces a common framework across the three policing organisations to ensure alignment and consistency.

More information can be found in the **Best Value self-evaluation framework for policing** document.

Best Value is grouped into 7 key themes - **Press the buttons on the left** to link directly to each themes respective tab.

Guide

Completing the Assessment
There are 40 statements grouped across the 7 Best Value Themes - Review the each statements within the context of your business area and knowledge of the organisation.

Each BV Statement is numbered 1-40 and has five associated columns:

How to Assess Alignment
This is a pre-populated list of considerations, indicators and questions which would demonstrate good practice of how the organisation can achieve and demonstrate best value in the statement area/subject matter.

Assessment
Score each statement using the following 6 point scale:

0	Not There	Not there or not been considered
1	Beginning	We have started developing / it is operating in a basic way
2	Partial	We have this in place but not consistently or everywhere
3	Established	Works well and done reliably and consistently
4	Strength	We are good at this but could still improve
5	Advanced	Recognised as leaders in this area. Best practice is shared beyond the organisation.

N/A There is also an option for 'Not Applicable' as some statements will not apply to all areas in all three organisations.

Narrative to Support Assessment

This is the view of the participant/contributor about how the organisation (or their business area) is performing against the 'BV Statement' and the 'how to assess alignment' indicators. The narrative should justify the assessment score and reflect on the current organisational picture and consider '**How are we doing?'** What are we doing well, what isn't working, what areas could be improved, what is the impact of our work here, etc. Consider broad strengths areas and requiring improvement by using the evidence we gather in day-to-day work and service delivery.

Please provide an honest assessment backed up with appropriate quality evidence.

Evidence to support Narrative

Having considered how we are doing, we need to demonstrate **'How do we know?'** that we are doing well or not. This is an opportunity to list the evidence that supports the contributors assessment of how the organisation (or business area) is performing against the BV Statement and indicators. **Evidence should be provided via hyperlink within the self assessment pack or other agreed method.**

Improvement Actions

'**What are we going to do now to improve?'** If the contributor/participant has identified areas where performance could be improved or enhanced this is an opportunity to add some high level improvement actions. These can be refined at a later stage and with consensus from a wider review team.

This is also an opportunity to highlight any areas of good practice that could benefit from wider promotion and possible use elsewhere in the organisation.

Best Value - Corporate Self-Evaluation

Results by Theme

Theme	Ref	Score
Vision & Leadership	1	1
	2	2
	3	3
	4	4
	5	5
	6	5
	7	3
Working with Partners & Communities	8	3
	9	1
	10	1
Governance & Accountability	11	3
	12	3
	13	3
	14	3
	15	3
	16	3
Effective Use of Resources	17	3
	18	4
	19	3
	20	4
	21	3
	22	4
	23	3
	24	4
	25	N/A
	26	2

Theme	Overall Score	Descriptor
Vision & Leadership	3.29	Established
Working with Partners & Communities	1.67	Partial
Governance & Accountability	3.00	Established
Effective Use of Resources	3.50	Established
Performance Management	2.75	Established
Equality & Diversity	3.00	Established
Environmental Impact	2.00	Partial

Performance Management	27	3
	28	N/A
	29	3
	30	3
Equality & Diversity	31	3
	32	3
	33	3
	34	3
	35	3
	36	3
Environmental Impact	37	3
	38	2
	39	3
	40	0

BV Theme: Vision & Leadership

3.29	Overall Theme Score

Ref	Characteristics we should be demonstrating	Considerations in assessing how well we are demonstrating achievement	Assessment	Narrative to support assessment	Supporting evidence	Improvement actions
1	**We have a clear vision - an agreed joint vision for policing that aligns with the priorities of Scottish government and partners, and a vision for the organisation with clearly defined strategic priorities and related outcomes.** **This vision was developed in partnership with, and clearly communicated to, the public, staff/officers, key partners, and other stakeholders, creating a culture of openness, trust, confidence and commitment.**	- Is there a clear, documented vision and purpose for the service that aligns with corporate and community planning priorities? - Has the vision been formally defined based on an understanding of stakeholder needs, expectations, and priorities? - Have representative stakeholders (e.g., community groups, employees, partners) been identified and engaged in shaping the vision? - Is there evidence that stakeholder feedback influenced the development of the final vision? - Are stakeholders actively engaged and committed to the vision, supported by ongoing communication and involvement?	1	**How are we doing?** (What is working well) (What could we improve or do better)	**How do we know?** (Make sure this links explicitly to narrative. Consider why you are submitting this evidence)	**What are we going to do now to improve?** Do we distinguish AFI and Improvement Actions?
2	**Our strategic and operational plans are realistic in delivering efficient policing and improved outcomes. These are linked to available resources, with clear targets and measures that allow us to demonstrate success in achieving our strategic outcomes.**	- Do strategic plans clearly align with the organisation's vision, purpose, priorities, and understanding of the wider ecosystem, capabilities, and major challenges? - Is the strategy regularly reviewed and adapted in response to changing needs, risks, and external/environmental factors? - Are improvement actions well defined (specific, measurable), logically prioritised and sequenced, and linked to creating clear value for identified stakeholders? - Do plans explain how intended value will be delivered, communicated, and supported through stakeholder buy in? - Do plans address long term sustainability including financial, environmental, social, and operational considerations? - Are risks, dependencies, and assumptions clearly identified and actively managed within the planning process? - Is there robust monitoring that tracks progress against plans, updates them when circumstances change, and demonstrates that improvements are being delivered and value realised?	2			
3	**We clearly link operational and business plans to our priorities and strategic plans. Operational plans reflect, where approprate, priorities identified through community planning and show how we are working with partners to provide services that meet community needs.**	- Is the organisation clear about its values and priorities, and are these aligned with wider strategic plans? - Are priorities shaped by a good understanding of community needs, partner priorities, internal capabilities, and wider environmental challenges? - Is there evidence that values and priorities are formally defined and used to shape operational and business plans? - Are operational and business plans regularly reviewed and adapted in response to changing needs, risks, and performance? - Are resource allocation decisions consistent with stated values, priorities, and intended outcomes? - Are performance targets set, monitored, and used to demonstrate delivery of priorities and value? - Is the value the organisation aims to deliver clearly communicated to stakeholders, and does communication support understanding and buy in? - Are trade offs between competing priorities identified, documented, and explained? - Can the organisation demonstrate that it is delivering the value it has committed to?	3			

4	**We demonstrate effective and visible leadership in driving continuous improvement and transformational change and supporting the achievement of strategic objectives. Leaders prioritise the use of resources and performance improvements that are likely to have the greatest impact.**	- How well embedded is a culture of continuous improvement, experimentation, and innovation across the organisation? - Do leaders actively drive, champion, and visibly support change and improvement initiatives? - Are the conditions in place (support, resources, capacity, and psychological safety) to enable staff to successfully deliver change? - Is there evidence of sustained support for change programmes from business areas and governing stakeholders? - Do change projects and programmes clearly link delivery expectations to available resources and capacity? - Are success measures defined for change initiatives, and is performance monitored against these measures? - Is there evidence that change activity is delivering the intended value for the organisation and its stakeholders? - Is performance actively improved through change, innovation, and learning? - Is the organisation transforming itself for the future through strategic, well managed change and continuously learning?	4			
5	**Our leaders lead by example and are self-aware. They commit to training and personal development to update and enhance their knowledge, skills, capacity and capabilities to deliver Best Value and perform their leadership roles, and they receive sufficient support to do so.**	- Do Exec members and senior managers demonstrate self awareness of their leadership role, strengths, and development needs? - Is there clear commitment to leadership development, supported by formal plans, training, and active participation in learning activities? - Are there effective mechanisms (e.g., PDPs, appraisals, competency assessments) to review, update, and strengthen leadership skills on an ongoing basis? - Is there evidence of a continuous learning culture at leadership level? - Do leaders actively shape organisational culture and nurture the organisation's core values through their behaviours and decisions?	5			
6	**We create a positive culture in which our people understand their contribution to the vision and objectives, and we empower staff/officers to deliver services and drive improvement.**	- Do staff understand the organisation's vision, objectives, expectations, and how their work contributes to delivering value and priorities? - Is there evidence of engagement, openness, collaboration, and a strong understanding of staff needs and expectations? - Are there effective mechanisms for two way communication, meaningful involvement, and capturing staff ideas, feedback, and improvement suggestions? - Are staff actively engaged in improvement, innovation, and the adoption of new technologies, with clear processes to assess and act on their contributions? - Is there sustained support from business and governance stakeholders for workforce engagement and involvement? - Is staff contribution helping to improve performance, deliver measurable value, and support organisational transformation?	5			
7	**We have developed a corporate approach to continuous improvement. Leaders foster a culture of continuous improvement, innovation, and collaboration, ensuring that we have a clear and shared understanding about how performance improvement is going to be secured.**	- Is there a clear framework that provides a consistent, organisation wide approach to continuous improvement? - Are improvement plans documented at corporate and service level, regularly reviewed, and updated to reflect progress, learning, and changing priorities? - Are improvement actions clearly linked to strategic priorities, outcomes, and organisational value? - Is there evidence of organisational learning, including sharing good practice, insights, and lessons learned across teams and services? - Are improvement activities embedded within governance structures, decision making, and performance reporting arrangements? - How well understood, communicated, and prioritised is continuous improvement within the organisation and wider organisation? - How embedded is a culture of continuous improvement, experimentation, innovation, and future focused transformation? - Does the organisation systematically analyse processes for efficiency, remove waste, and measure productivity improvements? - Are the conditions in place to support improvement and change, including leadership commitment, data, resources, and staff empowerment? - Is creativity, innovation, and the use of technology actively enabled, supported, and integrated into improvement activity?	3			

	- Is the organisation leveraging data driven insights and knowledge to inform improvement, prioritisation, and decision making? Is performance actively driven and improved through continuous improvement, innovation, and learning?				

BV Theme: Working with Partners & Communities

1.67	Overall Theme Score

Ref	Characteristics we should be demonstrating	Considerations in assessing how well we are demonstrating achievement	Assessment	Narrative to support assessment	Supporting evidence	Improvement actions
8	**We are proactive in identifying the needs of communities (including those that are hard to reach), citizens, staff/officers and other stakeholders and can demonstrate that meaningful and inclusive consultation and engagement have informed our strategic plans.**	- How structured, consistent, and well developed is stakeholder engagement across the organisation in practice? - Has stakeholder mapping been carried out to identify key groups, their needs, expectations, influence, and the wider ecosystem in which the organisation operates (including partners, capabilities, and external challenges)? - How are communities and other stakeholders identified, and how effectively are they supported and enabled to participate meaningfully? - Is there clear evidence of understanding stakeholder needs (communities, partners, staff, service users) and using this insight to shape purpose, vision, strategy, and the value the organisation aims to deliver? - - How effectively does the organisation communicate intended value to stakeholders and build understanding, buy in, and shared ownership of its strategic direction? - Is there evidence that the organisation delivers the value it commits to, and that stakeholders experience clear, consistent, and accessible engagement? - How well does the organisation collaborate internally and with partners to deliver shared outcomes, coordinated value, and an improved stakeholder experience?	3			
9	**We ensure that local delivery plans clearly reflect the priorities identified through community planning and show we are working with partners to deliver policing that meets stakeholder and community needs.**	-Do local delivery plans clearly reflect agreed priorities and define what success looks like for partnership working? - Is performance measured consistently across partnerships, with clear methods for evidencing outcomes and positive impacts? - Is there evidence of building and sustaining effective relationships with partners and stakeholders to support shared delivery? -Is the organisation contributing to wider development, wellbeing, and prosperity through partnership work and local delivery? - - Is the stakeholder and partner experience clearly defined, consistently delivered, and well managed? - Is customer, stakeholder, or partner perception evidence gathered and used to assess performance, impact, and areas for improvement?	1			
10	**We encourage opportunities for formal and informal partnerships, including through joint use of resources, joint funding options and shared service initiatives, where this will offer opportunities for efficiency savings and service improvements.**	- Is there a clear and structured process for identifying groups, partners, and communities to work with, including formal criteria or tools (e.g., a prioritisation matrix)? - - Are decisions about which groups to engage with supported by transparent, evidence based justification (e.g., needs, potential impact, risk, equality considerations)? - Are resources targeted to priority groups in a way that is clear, defensible, and based on sound evidence? - Is there a structured approach to building and sustaining effective relationships with groups, partners, and suppliers, including defined roles, commitments, and governance? - Is there evidence that partner and supplier perceptions are gathered and used to strengthen relationships and improve delivery? - - Does the organisation analyse and improve partnership related processes for efficiency, reducing waste, and enhancing productivity?	1			

BV Theme: Governance & Accountability

3.00	Overall Theme Score

Ref	Characteristics we should be demonstrating	Considerations in assessing how well we are demonstrating achievement	Assessment	Narrative to support assessment	Supporting evidence	Improvement actions
11	**We demonstrate good governance and transparency in decision-making throughout the organisation. We have robust structures that allow us to demonstrate effective scrutiny and challenge at all levels of planning, performance and service delivery. Our decisions are open and transparent and based on evidence that clearly links the allocation of resources to intended outcomes.**	- Is there clear, accessible guidance on what good governance looks like, and is it regularly reviewed and used in practice? - Does actual governance behaviour consistently align with documented expectations and standards? - How consistently does the organisation use evidence, performance insights, and cost/benefit analysis to inform decision making? -Is there evidence of a well designed, effectively implemented governance and performance management system? - Is ongoing support from governing stakeholders visible and sustained for governance processes, decision making, and organisational oversight?	3			
12	**We promote the highest standards of integrity and responsibility, establishing shared values, mutual trust and sound ethics across all activities. We have effective procedures to ensure that officers/staff comply with relevant codes of conduct and policies. This includes ensuring that appropriate policies on fraud prevention, investigation and whistleblowing are established, implemented and effective.**	-Are there clear, accessible codes of conduct and policies covering fraud prevention, investigation, and whistleblowing, supported by effective enforcement processes? - Are staff aware of these policies and processes, and is relevant training (mandatory or otherwise) provided to support understanding and compliance? - Do these policies and supporting documents reinforce and help steer the organisation's culture and core values? - Is there evidence that leadership actively shapes organisational culture and consistently demonstrates the organisation's core values in practice?	3			
13	**We have effective and accessible systems in place to record, analyse and report on complaints outcomes, trends and actions taken. We ensure that the complaints system is in line with all relevant Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO) guidance on complaints handling processes.**	- Is there a clear and accessible complaints framework that aligns with SPSO guidance? - Is the complaints system effective and easy for service users and stakeholders to access and navigate? - Are complaint trends systematically analysed, and are outcomes recorded and understood? - Is complaint information used to drive improvement and strengthen service delivery?	3			
14	**We have an information governance framework in place to ensure proper recording of, and appropriate access to, that information including by the public. Our governance framework complies with legislation.**	- Is there a comprehensive information governance framework, including policies for data protection, records management, and information security that meet legal and organisational requirements? - Are roles and responsibilities clearly defined, including statutory roles such as the SIRO and Data Protection Officer? - Is the organisation compliant with Freedom of Information (FOI) obligations, with clear processes for handling requests? - Is there a record of escalations, complaints, or referrals to the ICO, and are outcomes tracked and used to strengthen compliance? - Is data and information used effectively to support decision making, performance management, and governance?	3			
15	**We have a responsible attitude to managing risk and have business continuity plans in place to allow an effective and appropriate response to unplanned events and circumstances.**	- Is there a clear risk management framework that sets out how risks are identified, assessed, monitored, and escalated across the organisation? - Are risks regularly and systematically reviewed at all relevant levels (corporate, organisational, project), with clear escalation routes? - Are Business Continuity (BCP) and Disaster Recovery (DR) plans in place, covering critical services, IT systems, supply chain, and workforce availability? - Are BCP and DR arrangements regularly tested, reviewed, and updated to ensure they remain effective? - Are roles, responsibilities, and accountability structures clearly defined for risk management and continuity planning? - Is there evidence that effective risk and continuity management is supporting and enhancing organisational performance?	3			

16	**We make effective use of internal audit to drive improvement.**	-Is there an internal audit charter that defines the purpose, authority, responsibilities, and operating principles of internal audit? - Is the internal audit approach risk based, ensuring audit activity focuses on areas of greatest organisational importance and exposure? - Are audit findings reported clearly and promptly, with effective follow up arrangements to ensure agreed actions are implemented? - Is internal audit independent and objective in its work, reporting, and assurance role? - Does internal audit add value through meaningful insights, assurance, and recommendations that support improvement? - How well does the organisation learn from incidents, reviews, debriefs, and audit findings, and use this learning to improve practice? - Is there visible, sustained support from business and governing stakeholders for the internal audit function and its recommendations? - Is there evidence—such as stakeholder perception results—showing how internal and external stakeholders view the value of internal audit?	3			

BV Theme: Effective Use of Resources

3.50	Overall Theme Score

Ref	Characteristics we should be demonstrating	Considerations in assessing how well we are demonstrating achievement	Assessment	Narrative to support assessment	Supporting evidence	Improvement actions
	Finance					
17	**We have developed medium-term financial strategies and plans that align to the strategic priorities and demonstrate a financially sustainable model of policing. Our financial plans include clear links to how we use capital investment to deliver organisational priorities.**	- Is the financial strategy clearly aligned with organisational strategic priorities and reflected consistently through service plans, budgets, and performance reporting (the golden thread)? - How effectively does the organisation plan, manage, and monitor financial resources, including revenue, capital, reserves, and cashflow projections? - Are financial governance arrangements robust, with clear approval routes, schedules of delegation, adherence to financial regulations, and independent challenge? - Is there a financial risk register aligned to the corporate risk register, supported by stress testing, realistic contingencies, and time bound mitigations? - Are stakeholders consulted on budget decisions, and is financial reporting clear, accessible, and transparent? - Is there evidence of systematic options appraisal and prioritisation to support sound financial decision making?	3			
18	**We allocate and regularly monitor and report on budgets and other resources to ensure that they are co-ordinated effectively and are delivering agreed strategic priorities, objectives and outcomes.**	- Are budgets clearly aligned with strategic priorities, and are resource allocation decisions transparent and well documented? - Is there regular and effective budget monitoring that includes both financial and non financial performance (e.g., outcomes, KPIs)? - Are budgets and other resources coordinated across services, with evidence of cross functional planning and shared resource use? - Is accountability for budget management and compliance with financial regulations clearly defined and consistently applied? - Is there evidence of independent challenge to financial plans, monitoring, and decision making?	4			
19	**We have clear plans to transform services and realise efficiencies and/or benefits to close future budget gaps and we ensure that transformation and investment decisions are informed by clear business cases, with the benefits of investment clearly articulated and with defined measures of success.**	- Do transformation plans clearly address budget gaps, forecast pressures, and align with strategic priorities, outcomes, and the Scottish Public Finance Manual (SPFM)? - Are expected benefits clearly defined, quantified, evidence based, baselined, and owned by accountable individuals or teams, with a benefits register mapping them to outcomes and wider social value? - Is there a clear delivery plan with milestones, resources, skills, capacity, and controls for risks, issues, and benefits, subject to regular review? - Is progress reported regularly, including risks, issues, delivery confidence, and benefits realisation? - Are options appraisal, whole life costing, and value for money analysis used to inform decisions? - Is decision making clearly evidenced, including documentation, scrutiny, approvals, and independent challenge (e.g., PMO oversight, Internal Audit, external assurance)? - Is there evidence that the organisation is transforming itself for the future through structured, well managed change, innovation, and technology adoption?	3			
20	**We have a strategy for procurement and managing contracts and contractors that complies with legal and best practice requirements to deliver value for money.**	- Is there a documented procurement strategy that aligns with legislation and statutory requirements, and is it applied consistently in practice? - Are procurement processes transparent, fair, auditable, and designed to secure value for money through approaches such as whole life costing, cost benefit analysis, sustainability considerations, and effective competition? - Are supplier and contractor performance, compliance, and outcomes monitored through clear contract management and risk management arrangements? - Are lessons learned from previous procurements captured and used to improve future practice? - Is there evidence of innovation, collaboration, and effective relationship building with partners and suppliers to enhance value and improve outcomes? - Are partner and supplier perceptions gathered and used to understand relationship effectiveness and identify areas for improvement?	4			
	People					

21	**We have a strategic workforce plan that outlines the capacity and skills required to deliver our strategic outcomes and manage future service demands. Our strategic workforce plan aligns with financial scenarios in our medium term financial plan.**	- Is there a formal workforce strategy that clearly aligns with the organisation's vision, priorities, and values? - Does the strategy define required roles, behaviours, competencies, and performance standards that reflect organisational values and support role clarity and development? - Does the workforce strategy clearly link workforce planning to service delivery needs and organisational objectives? - Is the strategy effectively communicated and embedded through induction, appraisal, development processes, and ongoing staff engagement? - Is there evidence that staff understand the workforce strategy and what is expected of them? - Are accountabilities for implementing the workforce strategy clearly defined at the appropriate levels? - Is workforce reporting in place, with metrics that track progress against strategic workforce goals? - Is there evidence that the organisation successfully attracts, engages, develops, and retains talent in line with the objectives of the workforce strategy?	3			
22	**We ensure that we have the organisational capacity to implement our plans and make full use of staff/officers (including those on modified duties), ensuring that any relevant statutory and professional responsibilities are supported through an appropriate policy of Continuous Professional Development (CPD).**	- Is there a workforce capacity analysis in place, and is it clearly linked to strategic and operational plans? - How effectively is staff/officer deployment measured and optimised to meet organisational needs? - Is the organisation compliant with statutory and professional standards, with regular checks and reporting in place? - Is there an embedded CPD (Continuing Professional Development) policy, with accessible opportunities and integration into performance management? - Do workforce capability reviews inform forward planning, development needs, and resourcing decisions? - Are roles and accountabilities for workforce development, capacity planning, and capability management clearly defined? - Is there regular reporting on CPD uptake, workforce capacity, and compliance with relevant standards?	4			
23	**Staff/officers are managed effectively and know what is expected of them, with performance being regularly assessed and managed through performance appraisal.**	- Are roles, responsibilities, required behaviours/values, and SMART objectives clearly defined and aligned with organisational priorities? - Is there a documented and consistently applied performance appraisal process, supported by regular one to one meetings that review progress and provide guidance? - Are underperformance issues managed through supportive improvement plans that help staff meet expected standards? - Are team or individual development plans in place that reflect appraisal outcomes and identified development needs? - Is there evidence that the organisation effectively attracts, engages, develops, and retains talent in line with organisational values? - Do employment policies adequately cover equality, diversity, inclusion, reasonable adjustments, and other aspects of fair practice? - Is there a clear and accessible grievance process that staff understand and can use?	3			

24	**We support staff/officer wellbeing by demonstrating fairness, equity and safety in the workplace, adopting relevant statutory guidance through progressive workplace policies and a commitment to best practice in workplace relationships.**	- Is there a documented wellbeing strategy, with policies that meet statutory requirements and support fair, transparent people management practices? - Is diversity, equity, and inclusion genuinely embedded in organisational culture and reflected in recruitment, promotion, and performance processes? - Is the organisation compliant with health and safety regulations, with risk assessments completed and acted upon? - Are flexible working options, reasonable adjustments, and staff/officer assistance programmes accessible and effectively used to support staff wellbeing? - Are there initiatives that actively promote positive workplace relations, wellbeing, and inclusion? - Are regular staff surveys carried out to understand employee perceptions of wellbeing, fairness, equity, and inclusion, and is this feedback acted upon? - Is HR data (such as turnover, absence, recruitment, and grievances) systematically analysed to identify trends and areas for improvement? - Is there evidence the organisation attracts, engages, develops, and retains talent in a fair, inclusive, and supportive environment? - Is there evidence of how staff/officers feel about the effectiveness of fairness, equity, and safety within the workplace?	4			
	Assets, including Data and Digital Resources					
25	**We have a systematic, evidence-based approach to managing and planning all assets, including estates, equipment, vehicles, and digital infrastructure, ensuring they are used efficiently and effectively to enhance service delivery and support organisational priorities. This approach includes identifying and managing risks to assets and ensuring we have appropriate resilience plans for information systems.**	- Is there a systematic, evidence based approach to managing all assets — including land, property, equipment, vehicles, and digital infrastructure? - Are asset related risks (e.g., resilience, security, maintenance, lifecycle) identified, assessed, and effectively managed? - Do asset plans align with organisational priorities and demonstrate efficient and effective use of resources? - Are information and digital strategies in place and aligned to service delivery goals and organisational priorities? - Are there robust resilience arrangements for information systems, including business continuity and disaster recovery plans? - Is technology and digital transformation actively promoted and used to improve services and create organisational value? - Are asset, digital, and information strategies regularly reviewed and updated based on performance, risk, and organisational change? - Is there evidence of strong internal and external relationships that support effective asset management and sustainable value? - Is there evidence of innovation and effective use of technology across the organisation? - Is there evidence of effective management of assets and resources that supports service delivery and organisational objectives?	N/A			

BV Theme: Performance Management

2.75	Overall Theme Score

Ref	Characteristics we should be demonstrating	Considerations in assessing how well we are demonstrating achievement	Assessment	Narrative to support assessment	Supporting evidence	Improvement actions
26	**We set performance outcomes and targets that demonstrate delivery of our strategic priorities. We can demonstrate a trend of improvement over time.**	- Are performance targets clearly defined, SMART, and aligned to strategic priorities? - Is there an effective performance management system and governance framework in place? - Is there a regular process for reviewing and updating performance targets? - Is there evidence of continuous improvement informed by performance results? - Is there evidence that value has been clearly defined, created, and communicated through performance activity? - Is there evidence that the intended value is being delivered to stakeholders?	2			
27	**We have effective performance management arrangements and systematically measure performance across all areas of activity, with performance reports being regularly scrutinised by managers and senior leaders.**	- Is there a documented performance management framework that covers all key areas of activity? - Are performance measures comprehensive, relevant, and applied consistently across the organisation? - Are performance reports produced and reviewed at appropriate, regular intervals? - Is there evidence that actions are taken as a result of performance reviews? - How clearly are outcomes and impacts measured, demonstrated, and reported? - Is there evidence of an effective performance management and governance system? - Is there evidence of how value has been defined, created, and delivered through performance activity?	3			
28	**We ensure that there is regular and relevant performance reporting to stakeholders and that it gives a balanced view of performance, linked to priority service areas.**	- Is there a documented schedule for performance reporting, and are reports consistently produced and shared with relevant stakeholders? - Do reports provide a balanced view of strengths and areas for improvement, using an appropriate mix of quantitative and qualitative data? - Are performance measures aligned to strategic priorities and operational objectives, with data sources validated and definitions applied consistently? - Is reporting tailored to audience needs and does it clearly show progress against targets where appropriate? - Is there a process for gathering and acting on stakeholder feedback about the relevance and clarity of performance reporting? - Is there evidence that stakeholder expectations regarding reporting are being met and that ongoing support is being secured and maintained? - Is there evidence that stakeholder perceptions are gathered, considered, and reflected in performance reporting? - Is there evidence of how value has been defined, created, communicated, and delivered through performance outcomes?	N/A			
29	**We have established a corporate approach to identifying, monitoring and reporting improvement actions that will lead to continuous improvement in priority areas. This includes using regular and rigorous self-evaluation and comparative analysis to benchmark, monitor and improve performance.**	- Is there a documented, organisation wide methodology for managing and prioritising improvement actions based on clear evidence? - Do improvement actions clearly define expected outcomes/benefits, baselines, responsibilities, and timelines? - Is there a central system for tracking actions, with audit trails, status indicators, scrutiny, and regular oversight reporting? - Is there evidence that improvement activity delivers benefits and drives performance, supported by effective use of data and insights? - Are lessons learned captured, shared, and embedded into future work, with leaders promoting learning and reflective practice? - Are continuous improvement methodologies used, and is the overall improvement framework regularly reviewed and refined based on performance and stakeholder feedback?	3			

30	**We regularly conduct rigorous and transparent reviews and appraisal of options across all areas of work and take an innovative approach when considering how services will be delivered in the future. We can clearly demonstrate how improvement actions reflect a pace and depth of improvement that will lead to the realisation of priorities and the long-term sustainability of services.**	- Is there a documented, evidence based and systematic process for option appraisal and service reviews, with clear criteria, options, decisions, and communication? - Is there appropriate involvement of stakeholders, with needs, expectations, and wider partnership considerations factored into reviews and decisions? - Are improvement actions prioritised based on strategic impact, risk, feasibility, resources, and long term value, with clear owners, milestones, and realistic timelines? - Is there evidence that implemented improvements deliver significant, sustainable benefits aligned to policing priorities and future demand? - Are staff encouraged to identify improvement ideas, and is learning routinely captured and embedded into policies, procedures, training, and service design? - Does the organisation analyse processes for efficiency, reduce waste, and measure productivity improvements, including the use of innovation and technology where appropriate? - Is there evidence that performance is actively driven through review and improvement activity, contributing to organisational transformation and future readiness?	3			

BV Theme: Equality & Diversity

3.00	Overall Theme Score

Ref	Characteristics we should be demonstrating	Considerations in assessing how well we are demonstrating achievement	Assessment	Narrative to support assessment	Supporting evidence	Improvement actions
31	**We demonstrate compliance with all statutory duties in relation to equalities and human rights.**	- Is the organisation aware of and compliant with its obligations under the Equality Act 2010 (including the Public Sector Equality Duty) and the Human Rights Act 1998, with these duties formally embedded in relevant policies? - Are decisions, policies, and functions routinely and proportionately assessed for equality and human rights implications, with outcomes clearly recorded? - Is equality and human rights monitoring in place for services and the workforce, including demographic data, service uptake, outcomes, and performance indicators linked to protected characteristics? - Is compliance overseen through clear leadership and governance arrangements with defined responsibilities (e.g., EDI leads, HR, board oversight)? -Are statutory duties, equality objectives, progress updates, and relevant impact assessments published in line with legal requirements? - Are staff trained and regularly reminded of equality and human rights duties, with active communication promoting their consideration in daily work?	3			
32	**We take active steps to tackle inequalities and promote fairness across the organisation and our wider partnerships, including working conditions, training and community participation.**	- Do organisational policies comply with all relevant legislative requirements, including consistent application of reasonable adjustments? - Is staff training on equality and inclusion available, accessible, and well utilised? - Is there meaningful community participation and effective partnership working on equality and inclusion matters? - Are equality outcomes evidence based, measurable, and regularly reviewed to track progress and drive improvement? - Is accountability for equality clear, with transparent reporting and governance oversight? - Is there evidence that the organisation understands the needs of key stakeholders, including communities and staff, and has secured support from business and governing stakeholders? - Is there evidence that organisational actions contribute positively to community development, wellbeing, and societal prosperity?	3			
33	**We ensure that all officers, employees and corporate processes contribute to the commitment to equality and fairness outcomes.**	- Are roles and responsibilities for equality clear and explicit from Board level to frontline staff? - Does governance provide regular and effective scrutiny of progress toward equality outcomes? - Do corporate and service plans translate equality outcomes into service level objectives and individual performance goals? - Are equality and human rights impact assessments mandatory checkpoints for policy development and organisational change? - Do recruitment, induction, progression, talent management, and grievance processes meaningfully embed equality principles? - Is there evidence that the organisation's actions contribute positively to societal development, wellbeing, and prosperity?	3			
34	**We engage with, and involve, equality groups when developing relevant policies and practices and take account of socio-economic disadvantage when making strategic decisions.**	- Is there a documented and systematic approach to engaging with equality groups, including mapping relevant protected characteristics and communities experiencing socio economic disadvantage? - Is engagement early, proportionate, accessible, and designed to enable meaningful influence or co design of options? - Is feedback from equality groups recorded, with clear evidence of how it shaped proposals, mitigations, or option selection? - Has a robust Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA/EQHRIA) been completed and published, using reliable equality and socio economic data to analyse differential impacts? - Do governance papers clearly show how engagement and assessment findings informed recommendations and decisions? - Is there evidence that stakeholder needs are well understood and that organisational actions contribute positively to societal development, wellbeing, and prosperity?	3			

35	**We ensure the equality impact of policies and practices, including those delivered through partnerships, is always considered.**	- Is there a documented process requiring Equality Impact Assessments (EQIAs/EQHRIAs) for all relevant policies, service changes, and partnership arrangements, with EQIAs acting as mandatory governance checkpoints? - Are EQIAs consistently completed across all major decisions and delivery models, supported by robust evidence (protected characteristic data, socio economic analysis, stakeholder feedback)? - Is there clear documentation showing how EQIA findings influenced decisions, including mitigations or alternative options? - Are partnership arrangements reviewed for compliance with equality duties, and is there governance scrutiny of EQIA outputs before decisions are approved? - Is there a defined process for sign off, escalation, or challenge where equality impacts are unclear, unmitigated, or high risk?	3			
36	**We analyse equality impact information and data when planning services and measuring performance.**	- Do we collect accurate, complete, and regularly updated equality data on service usage, outcomes, and the workforce, broken down by protected characteristics and relevant socio economic indicators? - Is equality and socio economic data used to inform service design, planning, and resource allocation, with documented analysis of disparities and actions to address them? - Are equality considerations embedded in strategic priorities, performance frameworks, and dashboards through clear indicators and targets? - Do reports demonstrate progress against equality outcomes, including trend analysis and benchmarking for protected groups?	3			

BV Theme: Environmental Sustainability

2.00	Overall Theme Score

Ref	Characteristics we should be demonstrating	Considerations in assessing how well we are demonstrating achievement	Assessment	Narrative to support assessment	Supporting evidence	Improvement actions
37	**We have a culture that focuses on environmental sustainability, with clear accountability for its delivery across leadership and management teams.**	- Is there a documented environmental sustainability strategy with clear objectives, targets, timelines, and alignment to national or sector standards? - Are leadership roles, responsibilities, and governance structures for sustainability clearly defined and exercised (e.g., executive leads, committees, oversight arrangements)? - Are sustainability principles embedded in organisational values, behaviours, planning, procurement, and service delivery? - Is staff engagement promoted through training, initiatives, campaigns, or recognition schemes? - Are environmental impact assessments included in decision making processes? - Is there a sustainability performance framework with KPIs, regular reporting, leadership scrutiny, and transparent publication of progress? - Is there evidence that organisational actions contribute positively to wider societal development, wellbeing, and environmental prosperity?	3			
38	**We have a clear framework in place that facilitates the integration of environmental sustainability into all policies, financial plans, decision-making, services and activities through strategic-, corporate- and service-level action.**	- Is there a documented environmental sustainability framework or strategy with clear objectives? - Are governance structures and defined responsibilities for sustainability clear at corporate and service levels? - Are sustainability requirements embedded in core processes, including planning, budget setting, and investment appraisals? - Do service level plans include environmental objectives and KPIs, supported by a defined reporting framework for monitoring performance? - Are external benchmarks or certifications used to support assurance and continuous improvement? - Is there evidence that organisational actions contribute positively to wider societal wellbeing and the effective management of assets and resources?	2			
39	**We have set out clear guiding principles that demonstrate our commitment to environmental sustainability.**	-Have we formally documented guiding principles for environmental sustainability that align with national or local environmental policies and regulations? - Do these principles clearly define what environmental sustainability means for the organisation and are they embedded in corporate strategy, policies, and plans? - How are the principles communicated to staff, stakeholders, and the public, and are employees aware of their relevance to their roles? - Is training or guidance provided to help embed these principles into day to day operations, including procurement, project planning, service delivery, and risk management? - Are environmental considerations incorporated into performance reviews and decision making processes? - Is there evidence that organisational actions contribute positively to societal development, wellbeing, and overall environmental sustainability?	3			
40	**We evaluate, scrutinise and publicly report on environmental sustainability measures and indicators (both qualitative and quantitative).**	- Is there a defined process for evaluating environmental sustainability performance using both qualitative and quantitative measures? - Is there internal and external scrutiny of sustainability performance (e.g., management review, audit, governance or elected member oversight)? - Is environmental performance publicly reported, showing progress against targets (including Scottish Government targets) and explaining variances? - Are evaluation findings, audit results, and stakeholder feedback used to improve sustainability policies, practices, and decision making? - Is there evidence that sustainability is becoming embedded across the organisation and delivering sustained improvements that contribute to wider societal wellbeing and prosperity?	0			