



PUBLIC SERVICE IMPROVEMENT FRAMEWORK (PSIF) REVIEW

Report By Chief Executive

PURPOSE

- 1.1 The purpose of the Report is to inform the Comhairle of the changes to the Public Service Improvement Framework (PSIF) following the publication of the PSIF Framework 2023.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 2.1 Every three years the PSIF Framework is reviewed to ensure that it remains up to date and relevant for Scottish public sector organisations. The review has been led by the PSIF Review Group comprising of organisations who use the Framework (Appendix 1). The oversight and scrutiny of the PSIF Review Group ensures that the PSIF Framework statements reflect the current challenges and opportunities facing the public sector.
- 2.2 The outcomes of the PSIF Review were presented at the PSIF Learning Event in November 2023 and the final guidance document was published on the Knowledge Hub (KHub) within the PSIF [KHub](#) group pages on 23 November 2023 and the Comhairle's Best Value Continuous Improvement web [page](#). As per Appendix 2, 40 organisations use PSIF.
- 2.3 As per the Improvement Service, there is no change to the structure or process of the framework, 13 new statements have been introduced to reflect the current public sector landscape and eight statements, seen to be no longer pertinent, have been removed from the Framework. The Frontline and Corporate Checklists have both been updated to reflect the changes to the framework. There are 66 statements contained within the [PSIF Framework 2023](#).
- 2.4 The Comhairle are one of the first councils to pilot the PSIF Standard Checklist 2023. The outcome of the Comhairle's first self-assessment using the PSIF Framework 2023 by the Best Value Action Group was presented to the CMT on 23 October 2023 and the progress will be reported to the Comhairle in due course.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 It is recommended that the Comhairle note the updated PSIF Framework.**

Contact Officer:	Fiona Knappe, Team Leader, Organisational Development
Appendices:	1 PSIF Review Group
	2 PSIF Organisations - 2023
Background Papers:	PSIF Framework 2023

IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The following implications are applicable in terms of the Report.

Resource Implications	Implications/None
Financial	None
Legal	As per the Accounts Commission for Scotland's Publication of Information (Standards of Performance) Direction 2021 under section 1(1) (a) of the Local Government Act 1992, Councils have a statutory duty to ensure balance in reporting areas of improvement that have and have not been achieved. SPI 2 includes the requirement for the Comhairle to assess how it is performing against its duty of Best Value, including self-assessments and service review activity, and how it has responded to this assessment.
Staffing	None
Assets and Property	None
Strategic Implications	Implications/None
Risk	Self-assessment provides the opportunity to identify areas where continuous improvements can be made. This reduces the risk that the Comhairle is not identifying and implementing areas of good practice
Equalities	None
Corporate Strategy	The Report is aligned to Strategic Outcome 4.1.5 - Effective governance of the Comhairle is in place.
Environmental Impact	None
Consultation	None

BACKGROUND

- 5.1 The Comhairle has a duty to achieve Best Value by securing Continuous Improvement in the delivery of its services. In order to promote and enhance continuous improvement across the Comhairle the Public Service Improvement Framework (PSIF) has been adopted. PSIF was launched in 2006 and is a self-assessment tool which encourages organisations to conduct a systematic and comprehensive review of their own activities and results. The framework is reviewed every 3 years to ensure it remains up to date and relevant.
- 5.2 PSIF is mapped to the *Best Value: Revised Statutory Guidance 2020* [published](#) in March 2020 and was highlighted in the recent Audit Scotland publication *Best Value in Scotland: Twenty years of auditing Best Value and next steps for Best Value reporting in Scottish councils* [published](#) in September 2023.
- 5.3 Support with PSIF implementation is provided by the Improvement Service. The aim of the PSIF review is to develop new statements based on feedback from the PSIF Community at the previous year's Learning Event and includes a review of the current framework to see if some statements are no longer required/relevant.

PSIF FRAMEWORK 2023

- 6.1 There is no change to the structure or process of the framework and it still follows the same 6 sections:
1. Service Planning
 2. Staff
 3. Partnerships and Resources
 4. Processes and Services
 5. Leadership
 6. Results
- 6.2 The number of statements has increased from 61 to 66 and includes 13 new statements across the following seven themes based on feedback from the previous Learning Event.

- Transformation
- Climate Change
- Resilience/Emergency Preparedness
- Data Maturity
- Equalities
- Current Financial Climate
- Staff Wellbeing

6.3 The 13 new statements are listed below under the relevant section for ease of reference.

Service Planning

Statement No	Statement
1a.7	The service has business continuity plans in place that consist of the critical information the service needs to continue operating during an emergency.
1a.9	The service can evidence that it considers equality impact assessments at an early stage as part of policy development.
1c.2	Staff see data as a vital asset and values the role they play in producing and using good data.

Staff

Statement No	Statement
2c.3	Staff are clear on the value they bring to the service and how they contribute to delivering service priorities.
2e.2	The service can demonstrate that it supports and promotes the positive wellbeing of staff.

Partnerships and Resources

Statement No	Statement
3b.2	The service sufficiently resources the delivery of transformational projects.
3b.4	The service has appropriate cyber security arrangements and training in place to protect both the finances and the operation of the Council.

Processes and Services

Statement No	Statement
4c.2	The service ensures that a focus on improvement activity is maintained alongside competing priorities and a challenging financial climate.

Leadership

Statement No	Statement
5a.7	Leaders are clear on their role in promoting climate leadership across all levels of the council.
5a.8	Leaders value and invest in data, using it to monitor performance and inform decision making.
5c.1	Leaders engage meaningfully with communities, customers and stakeholders in the setting of service priorities.

Results

Statement No	Statement
6d.2	The service can evidence clear progress made as a result of the Transformation Programme.
6d.5	Results for the service have demonstrated progress or sustained performance in key areas in the last year.

6.4 The PSIF can also be used to focus upon specific areas or topics and are referred to as 'Red Threads' in the PSIF Framework Guidance 2023, pages 81-84. This would allow focus upon a particular area or topic without having to complete the full framework. The seven 'Red Threads' themes are:

1. Engaging with Communities
2. Governance and Accountability
3. Managing and Developing Staff
4. Climate Change and Sustainability
5. Performance Management and Reporting
6. Partnership Working
7. Customer Focus

6.5 As well as the Red Threads, the Improvement Service's PSIF Team can also develop bespoke checklists to focus upon a more specific issue or a Committee or Board. For instance, the PSIF team have developed bespoke checklists for areas such as: Corporate Risk Assessment; Compliance with the CIPFA Financial Management Code; Community Planning Partnerships; Integration Joint Boards; Adult Protection Committees; Child Protection Committees; and Resilience Boards. These self-assessments, while focussed on specific areas, nevertheless still follow the same self-assessment process as the Standard Framework but allow for a more targeted assessment of these areas.

6.6 The Framework has been mapped to:

- Best Value: Revised Statutory Guidance 2020;
- Education Scotland - A Framework for Evaluating the Quality of Services and Organisations (Overarching Framework);
- Care Inspectorate and Healthcare Improvement Scotland Quality Indicators and Illustrations: Joint Inspection for Adult Services;
- A Quality Framework for Children and Young People in Need of Care and Protection; and
- The Customer Service Excellence Standard

CONCLUSION

7.1 The Comhairle has a duty to achieve Best Value by securing Continuous Improvement in the delivery of its services. In order to promote and enhance continuous improvement across the Comhairle, the Public Service Improvement Framework (PSIF) is used to guide self-assessments.

7.2 The PSIF Review Group reviewed the PSIF during 2023 to ensure it remains up to date and relevant. There is no change to the structure or process of the Framework. The number of statements increased from 61 to 66 and includes 13 new statements across seven themes: Transformation; Climate Change; Resilience/Emergency Preparedness; Data Maturity; Equalities; Current Financial Climate; and Staff Wellbeing. The PSIF Framework 2023 was published on 23 November 2023.

PSIF 2023 Review Group

Organisation	Name
Aberdeenshire Council	Jane Wilkinson
Dumfries and Galloway Council	Heather Carnochan
Improvement Service	Barry McLeod
Improvement Service	Thomas Boyle
Midlothian Council	Saty Kaur
Renfrewshire Council	Pauline Moss
Scottish Prison Service	Robert Strachan
Stirling Council	Elaine McNicol

PSIF Organisations - 2023

Councils	Health and Social Care
1. Aberdeenshire Council	1. Aberdeen Adult Protection Committee (APC)
2. Clackmannanshire Council	2. Aberdeenshire Adult Protection Committee (APC)
3. Comhairle nan Eilean Siar	3. Argyll and Bute IJB
4. Dumfries and Galloway Council	4. Care Inspectorate Care Homes
5. Dundee City Council	5. Clackmannanshire & Stirling HSCP COG
6. East Lothian Council	6. Clackmannanshire & Stirling Public Protection Committee
7. Falkirk Council	7. Dundee Alcohol and Drug Partnership
8. Highland Council	8. Dundee APC/ CPC
9. Inverclyde Council	9. East Ayrshire Child Protection Committee
10. Midlothian Council	10. Falkirk IJB
11. Moray Council	11. Midlothian IJB
12. North Ayrshire Council	12. North Lanarkshire IJB
13. North Lanarkshire Council	13. Scottish Borders IJB
14. Orkney Council	14. South Ayrshire IJB
15. Renfrewshire Council	15. West Dunbartonshire Child Protection Committee (CPC)
16. Shetland Islands Council	16. West Dunbartonshire HSCP SMT
17. South Ayrshire Council	
18. South Lanarkshire Council	
19. Stirling Council	
	Other Organisations
	1. COSLA
	2. Improvement Service
	3. Police Scotland
	4. Scottish Fire and Rescue Services
	5. Scottish Police Authority

NB: This does not include Community Planning Partnerships, with over half of them having used PSIF (Improvement Service Dec'23).