

Assurance Request	ALEO Assurance Hub Review	Risk Rating
<p>Assurance that the organisation has adequate workforce and succession planning arrangements in place. Outline the nature of any changes to workforce or succession plans required as a result of the pandemic.</p>	<p>The Hub noted that ASV had been required to significantly reduce its staff costs as a result of the first national lockdown and had embarked upon an extensive restructuring process which concluded in September 2020.</p> <p>The Hub further noted that the ASV Board had asked the Executive Team to present its succession planning framework to a future Board meeting and it was anticipated that this would take place at the Board meeting in December 2021 which would allow time for the new ASV Training Academy to grow.</p> <p>The Hub was advised that ASV's new strategy (to be launched in October 2021) would contain a commitment to succession planning.</p> <p>The Hub agreed that an update following the launch of the new strategy and consideration of the succession planning framework by the ASV Board should be sought for a future Hub meeting.</p>	<p>Very Low</p>
<p>Assurance on training and development of Board members and workforce to align the needs of the organisation to skillset. Advise how any gaps in capability are being addressed.</p>	<p>The Hub noted the ASV Board skills matrix which had been submitted and which had been recently updated to reflect the skills of new Board members. The Hub agreed that this provided a good level of assurance.</p> <p>The Hub further noted that an annual appraisal process for Board members was being developed and it was anticipated that this would be in place in early 2022. The Hub agreed that an update on its development and rollout be provided to a future Hub meeting in 2022.</p> <p>ASV advised that during June 2021, Board members had contributed to the development of the new ASV strategy through 121 sessions, allowing them to add their distinct skill set and experience. This provided evidence of aligning Board members' training with the company's strategy. In addition, a professionally facilitated Board session was held on 10th August, providing further opportunity to influence and develop the strategic direction of ASV. This provided assurance to the Hub of embedded skills and behaviours.</p>	<p>Very Low</p>
<p>Assurance in respect of written or specific delegated powers to make provisions for emergency structures and decision making to be initiated should the Board be unable to meet.</p>	<p>The Hub noted that the matter of delegated authority was deferred from June's Board meeting due to the length of the meeting. It has been added to the Board meeting on the 17th September.</p>	<p>Low</p>
<p>Assurance that risk registers are in place, are kept under regular review with control actions monitored to completion, and are linked to the achievement of outcomes for the ALEO and the Council. Provide a copy of your risk register and evidence that it has been reviewed and updated since the last cycle of Hub meetings.</p>	<p>ASV provided a copy of the current risk register for review.</p> <p>The risks with the highest residual risk scores relate to the risk of further operational restrictions or closure due to the pandemic, financial risks associated with funding and increased operating costs and technology/IT infrastructure. Mitigation/response activities are identified for all risks recorded.</p> <p>The format of the risk of the risk register and risk categorisation remains unchanged since the last reporting cycle and continues to demonstrate effective risk recording and management.</p>	<p>Very Low</p>
<p>Assurance that ALEOs have an established risk appetite which is reflected in decision making structures. Advise of any plans for introducing a risk appetite statement, or do you already have one? If so, can this be shared. If not, can you outline current thinking on whether you would find this useful to guide decision making. The Council approved a risk appetite statement in December 2020 (copy provided).</p>	<p>ASV does not have a risk appetite statement in place and confirmed that the ACC risk appetite statement would be reviewed and considered. The Hub will request progress on this activity in the next reporting cycle.</p>	<p>Very Low</p>

Assurance that the organisation is managing the impacts of EU Exit, that risks are identified and controls are in place.	The Hub noted that it is proposed that the risk relating to the impact of EU Exit is removed from the register. The Hub is satisfied with this proposal due to the low level of risk presented to ASV by EU Exit.	Very Low
Assurance that ALEOs have risk-based internal and external audit plans in place and a process to address and close out audit recommendations to completion. Confirm to what extent audit plans have progressed since the update to the last cycle of meetings.	<p>External Audit:</p> <p>ASV provided evidence of External Audit activities in relation to Statutory Accounts as noted within the Board Meeting Minutes from December 2020.</p> <p>Internal Audit:</p> <p>The Hub will request 21/22 Internal Audit Plan in the next reporting cycle as the ASV financial year begins in August.</p>	Very Low
Assurance that accounts are being managed within budget and the level of financial risk to the Council is low through presentation of quarterly trading accounts.	The Hub noted that the ASV annual accounts are made up to 31 July each year and a draft set of accounts for 2020-21 are not yet available. However, financial reports are regularly submitted to the ASV Board and these figures are available. The forecast trading deficit for 20-21 is £550k which is £190k favourable against budget. The most recent cashflow figure provided indicated that ASV's operating reserves policy is still in place at the end of April, with a balance in excess of the £1.3m Operating Reserves target. The 2020/21 audited accounts will be covered in future Hub reporting cycle when these become available.	Low-Medium
Assurance that ALEOs have prepared a medium-term financial plan or had incorporated medium term planning into a Business Plan to provide assurance that ALEOs are prepared for core funding pressures.	The 3 Year Plan Update was presented to the 19 March 2021 ASV Board Meeting and further reviewed by Chief Officers at the 13 April 2021 Joint Partnership meeting. The plan made reference both to Covid mitigation actions as well as future funding levels.	Low-Medium