

**HUMAN RESOURCES COMMITTEE: 19 JULY 2021**

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**SUBJECT: NATIONAL CORE CODE OF ETHICS**

**JOINT REPORT OF THE CHIEF FIRE OFFICER, / CHIEF EXECUTIVE (CLERK TO  
THE AUTHORITY), FINANCE DIRECTOR AND PERSONNEL ADVISOR**

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**1. PURPOSE**

- 1.1 The purpose of this report to provide Members with information about the recent national launch of the new National Code of Ethics (Core Code) and the implications for the Service.

**2. BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 Following the national launch of the Core Code on 18 May 2021 by the National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC), the Local Government Association (LGA) and Association of Police and Crime Commissioners (APCC), this paper sets out the background to and implications of the Core Code, and highlights some of the implications around our local implementation within TWFRS.
- 2.2 Developed in consultation with the sector, the Core Code has also been developed in response to Sir Tom Winsor's recommendations in the State of Fire report 2019. It is designed to help employees of the Fire and Rescue Service (FRS) act in the best way towards each other and while serving the public.
- 2.3 The Core Code sits alongside the [Code of Ethics Fire Standard developed by the Fire Standards Board](#). Both will be referred to by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) and should therefore be used by FRSs when preparing for inspections.
- 2.4 Everyone in every FRS in England is expected to follow the Core Code, including those working with or on behalf of FRSs.
- 2.5 The Core Code sets out **five ethical principles**, based on the Seven Principles of Public Life, which provide a basis for promoting good behaviour and challenging inappropriate behaviour.

These include;

- **Putting our communities first** – we put the interest of the public, the community and service users first.

- **Integrity** – we act with integrity including being open, honest and consistent in everything we do.
- **Dignity and respect** - making decisions objectively based on evidence, without discrimination or bias.
- **Leadership** – we are all positive role models, always demonstrating flexibility and resilient leadership. We are all accountable for everything we do and challenge all behaviour that falls short of the highest standards.
- **Equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI)** – We continually recognise and promote the value of EDI both within the FRSs and the wider communities in which we serve. We stand against all forms of discrimination, create equal opportunities, promote equality, foster good relations and celebrate difference.

- 2.6 These ethical principles are designed to help to improve organisational culture and workforce diversity of FRSs, ensuring that communities are supported in the best way.
- 2.7 They are intended to be embedded in everything FRSs and their employees do and be at the heart of day-to-day activity, guiding individual behaviours, in particular when faced with difficult, changing and unclear situations.
- 2.8 As a “Core” Code, the author organisations recognise there will be differing governance arrangements and is flexible enough to be adapted by every service, where any local values, behaviours and governance models can be added, for example where they are part of a county council and obliged to also comply with the council’s code. It can be added to but not detracted from, thereby ensuring local values and expectations of behaviours can also be reflected.
- 2.9 The Core Code and the NFCC guidance are attached as Appendices 1 and 2 respectively.

### **3. Implications and Implementation in TWFRS**

- 3.1 The Service has decided to formally adopt the Core Code in principle; we should prepare a gap analysis and Implementation Plan which sets out all the ways by which the Code will be embedded in our policies, practices, communications and training. This Plan should be produced rapidly, although the actions in the Plan will be a mix of short, medium and long term objectives. We should replace the current TWFRS Values and Leadership Bond, although we must clarify whether/ how the 5 Ethical Principles in the Code might be translated as Organisational Values.

### **4. FINANCIAL INFORMATION**

- 4.1 There are no direct financial implications as a result of this report.

### **5. EQUALITY AND FAIRNESS IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 The implementation of the Core Code offers another opportunity to emphasise and communicate our commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion.

## **6. HEALTH AND SAFETY IMPLICATIONS**

6.1 There are no health and safety implications in respect of this report.

## **7. RECOMMENDATIONS**

7.1 Members are recommended to:

- a) Note the content of this report;
- b) Receive further reports as necessary.

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## **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

The under mentioned background papers refer to the subject matter of the above report:

- Code of Ethics Fire Standard developed by the Fire Standards Board.
- National Code of Ethics (Core Code).

