



**TYNE AND WEAR FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY**

**Item No. 5**

**MEETING: GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE 6 MARCH 2023**

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**SUBJECT: NEW MEMBER CODE OF CONDUCT AND ETHICS**

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

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## **1 INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is for the Governance Committee to consider the new proposed Member Code of Conduct and Ethics ("the Code") that is attached to this report at Appendix 1.

## **2 BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 The new Code will replace and expand upon the Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Authority's existing Member Code of Conduct. The new Code looks to embody the required behaviour and conduct that applies to Members of the Fire and Rescue Authority, and also reflects the existing organisational values of the Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Service.
- 2.2 The new Code will now also encompass the ethical principles as set out in the new Core Code of Ethics for Fire and Rescue Services (the Ethics Code).
- 2.3 The Ethics Code was developed by the National Fire Chiefs Council, the Local Government Association, and the Association of Police and Crime Commissioners, in consultation with the sector. It was created in response to Sir Tom Winsor's recommendation in the State of Fire report 2019, and is designed to help everyone working in the Fire and Rescue Service act in the best way towards each other, while serving the public.
- 2.4 All Fire and Rescue Services in England, including those working with or on behalf of Fire and Rescue Services, are expected to follow the Ethics Code. The Ethics 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 five ethical principles are;
- **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.

2.5 The ethical principles are designed to help to improve the organisational culture and workforce diversity of Fire and Rescue Services, and ensure that communities are supported in the best way. They are intended to be embedded in everything the Fire and Rescue Service does, and be at the heart of day-to-day activity, in particular when faced with difficult, changing and unclear situations.

### **3 NEW MEMBER CODE OF CONDUCT AND ETHICS**

- 3.1 The Code has been produced jointly with the Monitoring Officer to ensure that it incorporates all necessary legal requirements.
- 3.2 As the current Member Code of Conduct forms part of the Standing Orders of Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Authority, the proposed new Code requires the approval of the Authority prior to implementation. If approved by the Authority, the Code will be implemented through formal communication with existing Members, and will also be incorporated into the induction briefing for future new Members.
- 3.3 The new Member Code of Conduct and Ethics will complement the Employee Code of Conduct and Ethics which was approved and adopted by the Fire and Rescue Authority at its meeting on 10 October 2022.

### **4 RISK MANAGEMENT**

- 4.1 A risk assessment has been undertaken to ensure that the risk to the Authority has been minimised as far as practicable. The risk to the authority has been assessed as low utilising the standard risk matrix based on control measures being in place.

### **5 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 There are no financial implications in respect of this report. It is anticipated that the implementation of the new Code can be undertaken using existing resources and budgets.

## **6 EQUALITY AND FAIRNESS IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 Equality and Fairness are intrinsic to the Code, and its approval and implementation will support the maintenance and development of a culture of equality and fairness across the Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Service.

## **7 HEALTH AND SAFETY IMPLICATIONS**

- 7.1 There are no direct health and safety implications arising in respect of this report.

## **8 RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 8.1 The Governance Committee is recommended to endorse the new Member Code of Conduct and Ethics that is attached to this report.

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## **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

The under mentioned Background Papers refer to the subject matter of the above report:

Core Code of Ethics for Fire and Rescue Services

