

ESSEX POLICE, FIRE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER
FIRE & RESCUE AUTHORITY
Essex County Fire & Rescue Service



Meeting	ECFRS Strategic Board	Agenda Item	13
Meeting Date	5 th June 2019	Report Number	
Report Author:	Karl Edwards		
Presented By	Karl Edwards		
Subject	Grievance Policy		
Type of Report:	Information		

RECOMMENDATIONS

Members of the Board are asked to note the updated position regarding ECFRS Grievance Policy.

BACKGROUND

Following the Independent Cultural Review of Essex County Fire and Rescue Service and shortly after the formation of the Expert Advisory Panel the Grievance Policy was reviewed as part of the Services approach to our ongoing HR Policy review and plan.

ACAS Policy Review:

The objectives of the 2016 review were to form a view of the current Grievance Policy and to recommend and ensure that the policy was compliant with the ACAS statutory Code of Practice, best practice and legislative changes.

The extant Grievance Policy was reviewed by ACAS against the current ACAS Code of Practice for Disciplinary and Grievance Procedures and the summary points are highlighted below.

- The current grievance procedures refer in a number of places to the statutory procedures that were removed in 2009 and replaced by the ACAS Code of Practice 04/2019 as amended by 03/2015.
- There are a couple of minor points that require clarity e.g. para 2. Formal Stage – ‘take the matter up on their behalf’ – the Code is specific about collective grievances but it is not clear if that is what this refers to.
- Also para 5. – ‘some information may be withheld’. Good practice would be to provide clarity as to when it is anticipated this provision may be used.

Subsequent action:

Following this piece of work ACAS completed a programme of workshops with all rep bodies to examine the perceived shortcomings of the Grievance processes. This was followed by a published report to all parties from ACAS and subsequent meetings with all parties.

A further Grievance Workshop took place on the 11th April 2018 and was attended by representatives from the recognised trade unions and HR. The purpose of the session was to discuss the existing grievance policies and procedures in order to identify particular areas of concern and reach a common approach to interpretation. The information gathered was to be used to inform the review of the policy.

Following the above workshop it was agreed that Grievance Policy would not be subject to change at this current time given that the ACAS review had highlighted minimal changes. ECFRS are also awaiting the feedback from the Real World HR review and from the HMICFRS inspection, which will further assist in highlighting any requirements for change.

In order to ensure that the Grievance Policy is correctly adhered to a number of managerial training courses outlined below have taken place and random sampling will also be carried out to ensure that we are undertaking quality assurance checks.

- Conflict Management
- Resolving People Issues – Informal and alternative resolutions and Grievance training
- Coaching course – offering colleagues the opportunity to learn and improve their coaching skills

BENEFITS AND RISK IMPLICATIONS

None at this current time

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

None arising from this report

EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

All policies and procedures will require an Equality Impact Assessment to be undertaken.

WORKFORCE ENGAGEMENT

Further managerial development workshops will be undertaken to ensure compliance against policy.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

None arising from this report