



Meeting	Performance & Resources Board	Agenda no.	10
Meeting Date	30 June 2022		
Report Authors:	Jenny Smith		
Presented By	Colette Black		
Subject	NFCC Code of Ethics - Update		
Type of Report:	Information		
Action Point No.		For Publication	Yes

RECOMMENDATIONS

None. this update is for information only.

BACKGROUND

The NFCC Fire Standard Core Code of Ethics has been adopted in its entirety within ECFRS as a key enabler in continuing to drive positive culture change. The Core Code Fire Standard was formally launched on 31 January 2022 with an underpinning three-stage “Inform, Implement and Embed” planned approach.

This paper provides an update on progress made against this plan and highlight the remaining activities and timelines for completion.

OPTIONS AND ANALYSIS

As noted above, the approach was three-fold; to Inform, Implement and Embed.

Inform:

We have reached out to colleagues through the staff networks, and through the following routes:

21 January - Email to all (1,390) colleagues - 58% open rate (810 opens), 4% click rate (people who clicked through to policy itself)

21 January - Daily News story - 327 unique page views (384 total views)

24 January - The Shout - 53% open rate (734 opens), 38 clicks through to news story

31 January - Managers Briefing - 90 attendees (virtual)

10 February - Video message from Chief Fire Officer - viewed by 245 colleagues, 24 likes and 2 comments

21 February - 94 attendees (virtual)

Managers were asked to discuss with their teams/watches. Feedback was received from various Watches on the ways in which they can meet the principles of the Standard.

Delivering the activities through the key stages identified in the initial project plan will ensure that we are working towards adopting the recommendations in the Fire Standards. These activities are outlined below.

Implement:

The implementation approach was developed through self-assessment and analysis of our current state, with resulting actions captured within an Implementation Toolkit. Our commitment was to:

Activity	Update
<p>SLT (Service Leadership Team) papers will include a Core Code review section incorporated into PIA (People Impact Assessment) section</p> <p>Core Code and Fire Standards will be included in Induction for all new joiners</p> <p>Core Code question-set will be developed to use for all new recruitment and promotions</p> <p>Online training available to all</p>	<p>Completed. All decision papers now include reference to the Code of Ethics within the decision.</p> <p>Now in place</p> <p>Now in place</p> <p>54% of employees have so far completed the training. To increase completion rates to 100%, the Learning and Development team are working closely with managers to understand and address blockers. Actions being taken include moving the course to PDR-Pro for operational colleagues having difficulty accessing Learn Pro courses, and reminder communications including display screens and on laptop front screens. It is envisaged this will be completed by the end of the year.</p>
<p>Run a culture and behaviours session with senior teams</p>	<p>SLT (Service Leadership Team) discussion regarding leader’s role modelling the ethical principles in decision-making from the top down.</p>
<p>Run manager workshops to explore scenarios, focussing on how the Core Code can guide effective decision making</p>	<p>Group discussion on Code of Ethics covered at Manager Briefing.</p>
<p>Review policies in line with policy schedule to ensure the Core Code is fully reflected in all that we do</p>	<p>A 12-month review programme of people policies and procedures to identify and address gaps e.g., Recruitment policy, Code of Conduct with 12 policies reviewed to date and a further 6 in plan over the next 6 months.</p>

The Implementation Toolkit details all the 10 requirements to meet the Fire Standard, along with the actions owners and timelines that address each requirement.

At this stage, we are 81% compliant and on track to deliver within the expected timeframes. Continued progress will be reported through the Fire Standards updates and an overview of progress against the 10 requirements can be found at Appendix A.

Embed:

We committed to:

Activity	Update
We will include Learning with particular focus on the Senior Leaders requirement in our development pathways learning	Our recruitment, induction and progression processes all include a focus on the Code of Ethics, and they now form part of our selection and progression measures to ensure our managers are leading and role modelling ethical principles
We will 'Lead from the Top' - our CFO (Chief Financial Officer) and senior leadership will continue to describe the importance of the Core Code and visibly role model and reinforce the standards.	Ongoing
Review to ensure our colleagues continue to understand importance, know how to feedback professionally, assess feedback loops to identify any remaining barriers	Looking ahead, ELT (Extended Leadership Team) will be considering how they can further contribute to the embedding of the Code within their own teams, processes and plans, with a learning module including embedding change and Code of Ethics included as part of their Leadership Development Programme later this year.
Enable understanding and agreement - provide a range of communications and approaches so that the 'golden thread' connecting Fire and Rescue Plan, IRMP (Integrated Risk Management Plan) Annual Plan and Personal Objectives ("What we do") is contextualised with our expectations against the Core Code of Ethics ("How we do it")	The Annual Plan for 2022/23 has a specific objective on embedding the Code of Ethics in everything we do, and all Appraisals should include an objective relating to the 10 principles.
Provide feedback loops - ensure a range of feedback loops, tools and avenues are in place, accessible and promoted so that employees can feel confident to challenge inappropriate behaviour at all levels, regardless of rank, role, or level.	LRS provides coaching and development for developing managers, our HR partnering team are now well embedded in their teams, and our Dignity at Work provision is regularly promoted to provide an alternative route to raise concerns.

The extent to which the code is embedding into Service ways of working will be measured over time. This will be done as part of the Employee Engagement survey in October 2022.

RISKS AND MITIGATIONS

Adoption of the Core Code of Ethics is an additional control measure for risk SRR150019:

‘There is a risk that due to the absence of a positive and supportive culture the Service fails to provide a safe and inclusive culture which ensures the well-being of staff and contributes to attracting a diverse workforce.’

LINKS TO FIRE AND RESCUE PLAN

This links to our aspiration contained within the Fire and Rescue Plan to promote a positive culture in the workplace, and additionally, supports our aspiration to ensure a fair and accessible whistleblowing and grievance policy is in place for all.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no financial implications associated with the Core Code.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no legal implications.

STAFFING IMPLICATIONS

There are no staffing implications from this paper.

EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

We have considered whether individuals with protected *characteristics will be disadvantaged as a consequence of the actions being taken*. Due regard has also been given to whether there is impact on people who identify as being part of each of the following protected groups as defined within the Equality Act 2010:

Race	No	Religion or belief	No
Sex	No	Gender reassignment	No
Age	No	Pregnancy & maternity	No
Disability	No	Marriage and Civil Partnership	No
Sexual orientation	No		

The Core Code of Ethics has been considered in preparing this paper.

HEALTH AND SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

There are no health and safety implications.

CONSULTATION AND ENGAGEMENT

This is a new NFCC Fire Standard which we have an obligation to adopt. We have engaged with our representative bodies and employee groups on the way in which it is to be adopted.

FUTURE PLANS







There is a further opportunity to review the Service Values in 2023 once the Core Code of ethics is fully embedded, as they will have been in place for 5 years at that point and there is some overlap with the Core Code of Ethics





LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS AND APPENDICES

[Core Code of Ethics for Fire and Rescue Services \(England\)](#)

Appendix A

Fire Standards Recommendations – add in RAG and short narrative

Criteria	Description	Fully Compliant	Partially Compliant	Non-Compliant	Notes
1	<p>A fire and rescue service must:</p> <p>i. Adopt and embed the Core Code to demonstrate that the service is fully committed and compliant at both an individual and corporate level</p>				<p>4 non-compliant areas – IRMP and Fire and Rescue Plan do not yet contain reference to Core Code next review is 2024. Procurement documentation does not specifically refer to core Code. ELT leadership training module in plan but not yet delivered</p>
2	<p>ii. Ensure the attitudes, professional behaviours and conduct described within the core code are reflected in its decision-making, policies, procedures, processes, and associated guidance that govern how the service manages and supports its workforce</p>				<p>1 non-compliance – Operational Policies to include reference to Core Code of Ethics. Will be included as policies are subject to review</p>
3	<p>iii. Provide training and support to all those who work for, or on behalf of, a service to achieve their understanding of the Core Code and an appreciation of their responsibilities in adhering to it</p>				
4	<p>iv. Not detract from the Core Code</p>				
5	<p>Those who lead services and those who work for, or on behalf of, the service must:</p> <p>i. Understand, respect, and follow the principles of the Core Code and demonstrate this by their commitment to it and their responsibility for upholding it</p>				<p>Partially compliant – Learn-pro training modules are in progress</p>
6	<p>ii. Conduct themselves in accordance with the Core Code</p>				<p>Partially compliant – 2023 Objectives to include one based on Principles</p>

7	<p>Those responsible for the governance of fire and rescue services, whilst complying with their own ethical codes must:</p> <p>i. hold the Chief Fire Officer to account for the implementation of the Core Code at a local level</p>		
8	<p>ii. Play a proactive role in challenging behaviour inconsistent with the Core Code</p>		<p>1 Partially compliant – training packages in development to equip employees with strong feedback and constructive challenge skills</p>
9	<p>iii. Ensure strategies, policies and performance measures are in place to promote and embed a positive and inclusive culture</p>		<p>3 partially compliant – Programme in place to include consideration into People policies including Dignity at Work and Positive Action</p>
10	<p>A fire and rescue service should:</p> <p>i. Designate a senior leader who is responsible for promoting the Core Code throughout the service and ensuring that all those who work for, or on behalf of, the service understand its contents and what is expected of them</p>		
Total		