



<b>Meeting</b>	<b>Service Leadership Team</b>	<b>Agenda no.</b>	<b>5f</b>
	<b>Strategic Board</b>		<b>8</b>
<b>Date</b>	<b>1 November 2022</b>		
	<b>7 December 2022</b>		
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<b>Presented By</b>	<b>Colette Black, Director of People Services</b>		
<b>Subject</b>	<b>Review of the Implementation of the Code of Ethics</b>		
<b>Type of Report</b>	<b>Decision</b>		
<b>Action Point No.</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>For Publication</b>	<b>Yes</b>

## **RECOMMENDATION(S)**

The Service Leadership Team is asked to:

- a) Note progress against implementation and embedding of the Core Code of Ethics
- b) Approve the intention to progress with utilisation of a Cultural Maturity Model (see appendix A) as a means of:
  - Measuring effect of implementing the Core Code of Ethics,
  - Ensuring values and behaviours are also incorporated and assessed.

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

This report provides an update on progress made against the implementation plan and highlights the remaining activities for completion and embedding of the Core Code of Ethics. Appendix A details intention to progress with utilisation of a Cultural maturity model to measure the effect of implementing and embedding the Core Code of Ethics and ensuring that the service values and associated behaviours are incorporated and support our continued cultural maturity.

## **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.

A Core Code of Ethics Workshop was held on 12 July 2022 attended by various Fire and Rescue Services, including Essex. An update was provided by HMICFRS Roy Wilsher, HM Inspectors of Constabulary and HM Inspector of Fire and Rescue Services. Round three of the inspections will focus on how the Core Code has been embedded using three key questions:

- How well does the Fire and Rescue Service promote its values and cultures?
- How well trained and skilled are Fire and Rescue staff?
- How well is it developing?

During the Workshop case studies were shared by a number of Fire and Rescue Services.

An NFCC Core Code of Ethics Workplace Group has been created as a shared area for Fire and Rescue Services who have adopted the Core Code of Ethics. We will continue to monitor and utilise shared resources according to our needs.

The activities identified within the Fire Standard Implementation Tool will ensure we are able to evidence our embedding of this work.

## OPTIONS AND ANALYSIS

This section of the report provides an update on the implementation and embedding actions.

### Inform:

A reminder of what informing activity has been completed:

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

Activity	Date Completed
Email to all (1,390) colleagues – 58% open rate (810 opens), 4% click rate (people who clicked through to policy itself)	21 January 2022
Daily News Story – 327 unique page views)	21 January 2022
The Shout – 53% open rate (734 opens), 38 clicks through to news story	24 January 2022
Manager Briefing – 90 attendees (virtual)	31 January 2022
Video message from Chief Fire Officer – viewed by 245 colleagues, 24 likes and 2 comments	10 February 2022
Manager Briefing – 94 attendees (virtual) Group Discussion on Code of Ethics covered	21 February 2022

### Implement:

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

The items completed are:

Activity	Date Completed
<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>Completed. All decision papers now include reference to the Code of Ethics within the decision.</p> <p>Now in place. The induction Sway includes reference to Core Code of Ethics.</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>7th March 2022 – SLT/ELT meeting to 'grow leadership', living our leadership principles, values, Code of Ethics plus the SDI session facilitated by Les Potton.</p>

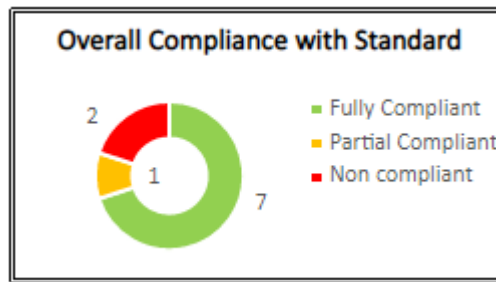
Activities still ongoing:

Activity	Update
<p>Core Code question-set will be developed to use for all new recruitment and promotions</p>	<p>We are creating a suite of assessment materials offering two options to hiring managers – specific interview questions of Code of Ethics, or integrated personal indicators whereby Code of Ethics is measured alongside leadership framework attributes (several questions/options cover both elements). In addition, the recruitment advisors are working to map all the assessment questions to elements of the Core Code of Ethics and which positive indicator refers to it. This will be completed by Q4 as we are making the changes when there is a requirement for assessment material.</p>

Activity	Update
Online training available to all	<p>77.6% of employees (this includes volunteers) have so far completed the training. This is an increase from 54% in June 2022. To increase completion rates to 100%, the Learning and Development team are working closely with managers to understand and address blockers.</p> <p>As with Safeguarding training, we have produced a report for ELT to show those colleagues with outstanding modules. These will be issued monthly going forward. A new release in LearnPro in October will enable the data to be split by department. This data will also be included on the Dashboard at Directorate level.</p> <p>The historical issues with operational staff having difficulty accessing Learn Pro courses have been addressed. There is a link to LearnPro in the PDRPro.</p>
Run manager workshops to explore scenarios, focussing on how the Core Code can guide effective decision making	<p>Group discussion on Code of Ethics covered at Manager Briefing.</p> <p>Course content being finalised and developed for delivery via via a 'train the trainer' model in Q4. Content being extended to include link to values and behaviours.</p> <p>To help with embedding these resources will be available for managers to refer to in LearnPro.</p>
Review policies in line with policy schedule to ensure the Core Code is fully reflected in all that we do	<p>Since our last update in June 2022, 4 policies have been reviewed, which included a new policy on Domestic Abuse which was not on the review schedule and thinking around the Core Code of Ethics incorporated, in the next 6 months, 4 policies are due to be reviewed.</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 on track to deliver within the expected timeframes. Continued progress will be reported through the Fire Standards updates at the Continuous Improvement Board and an overview of progress against the 10 requirements can be found at Appendix A, summary provided below:



**Embed:**

We committed to:

Activity	Update
We will include Learning with particular focus on the Senior Leaders requirement in our development pathways learning	<p>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. A Code of Ethics question is now included within all interviews.</p> <p>Further work – pathway through progression – passport to be developed. A proposal and approach to link this to the role maps is to be developed. e.g. Crew Manager to Watch Manager development days to include a Code of Ethics scenario. This will capture colleagues going through the process but doesn't capture CPD of those currently in role.</p> <p>We need to confirm the approach for role specific approach to achieve the coverage we need without needing to change the role map. We will be looking into solutions.</p>
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.	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Fortnightly focus on each of the five ethical principles and what they mean in practice (see below).</p>
Review to ensure our colleagues continue to understand importance, know how to feedback professionally, assess feedback loops to identify any remaining barriers	<p>The Core Learning Pathways now includes a course on the importance of giving feedback professionally – 'Coaching and feedback'.</p>

	<p>A Constructive v destructive workshop for managers is to be created. This will be loaded onto LearnPro after the workshops.</p>
<p>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")</p>	<p>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.</p> <p>The Appraisal Meeting Guidance included the following:</p> <p>'This year, following the recent launch of the Code of Ethics, please also consider using this meeting as an opportunity to check your understanding of this and ask for clarity if you are unsure of anything.'</p> <p>Next steps communications plan:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• From w/c 14 November - Fortnightly focus on each of the five ethical principles and what they mean in practice</li> <li>• December 2022 - Visuals for all sites (using wall adhesive approach used with 10 priorities), alongside our values</li> <li>• December 2022 - Landing/desktop page - the first thing laptop users see when they log in</li> <li>• December 2022 - Infographic to demonstrate how the Core Code of Ethics fits/aligns with our values</li> <li>• Q1 2023/24 Workshops for managers in the new year (post-employee survey) including practical skills like managing difficult conversations</li> </ul>
<p>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.</p>	<p>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.</p> <p>The annual employee survey 'One' will focus on the Core Code of Ethics and will include the following question this year: 'We launched the Core Code of Ethics in March 2022. Can you describe any further</p>

	<p>work you feels may need to be undertaken to embed this in our Service?’</p> <p>Pulse survey – plan/timing to be developed after the main engagement survey has been completed.</p>
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The extent to which the code is embedding into Service ways of working will be measured over time initially through the employee survey and pulse surveys and further measures will be considered and applied.

### **Cultural maturity model (Appendix A)**

Alongside the existing Core Code of Ethics implementation plan, we propose to progress with utilisation of a Cultural Maturity Model (see appendix A) as a means of:

- Measuring effect of implementing the Core Code of Ethics,
- Ensuring values and behaviours are also incorporated and assessed.

### **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 of Ethics.

### **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	N	Religion or belief	N
Sex	N	Gender reassignment	N
Age	N	Pregnancy & maternity	N

Disability	N	Marriage and Civil Partnership	N
Sexual orientation	N		

The Core Code of Ethics Fire Standard has been fully considered and incorporated into the proposals outlined in 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

Criteria	Description	Fully Compliant	Partially Compliant	Non-Compliant	Notes
1	<p><b>A fire and rescue service must:</b></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 – 1) CRMP 2) Fire and Rescue Plan both do not yet contain reference to Core Code next review is 2024. 3. Procurement documentation does not specifically refer to core Code. 4. Ethical principles considered in all decision making processes at ELT (ToR to be confirmed)</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>				<p>Fully Compliant</p>
4	<p>iv. Not detract from the Core Code</p>				<p>Fully Compliant</p>
5	<p><b>Those who lead services and those who work for, or on behalf of, the service must:</b></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>Now Fully Compliant with the Learn-pro training modules in place.</p>

6	ii. Conduct themselves in accordance with the Core Code		Fully Compliant
7	<b>Those responsible for the governance of fire and rescue services, whilst complying with their own ethical codes must:</b> i. hold the Chief Fire Officer to account for the implementation of the Core Code at a local level		Fully Compliant
8	ii. Play a proactive role in challenging behaviour inconsistent with the Core Code		Now Fully Compliant with training packages to equip employees with strong feedback and constructive challenge skills
9	iii. Ensure strategies, policies and performance measures are in place to promote and embed a positive and inclusive culture		3 partially compliant – Programme in place to include consideration into People policies including Dignity at Work and Positive Action
10	<b>A fire and rescue service should:</b> 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		Fully Compliant
<b>Total</b>			21 Fully Compliant 6 Partially Compliant 5 Non-Compliant