

Fire & Rescue Service Headquarters Summergroves Way Kingston upon Hull HU4 7BB  
 Telephone 01482 565333

<b>To:</b> Members of the Governance, Audit and Scrutiny Committee	<b>Enquiries to:</b> Samm Campbell <b>Email:</b> <a href="mailto:committeemanager@humbersidefire.go.uk">committeemanager@humbersidefire.go.uk</a> <b>Tel. Direct:</b> (01482) 393205 <b>Date:</b> 1 April 2022
--	---

Dear Member

I hereby give notice that a meeting of the **GOVERNANCE, AUDIT AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE** of Humberside Fire Authority will be held on **MONDAY 11 APRIL 2022 at 10.00AM** at HUMBERSIDE FIRE & RESCUE SERVICE HEADQUARTERS, SUMMERGROVES WAY, KINGSTON UPON HULL, HU4 7BB.

**Public and press attendance at meetings**

Due to current social distancing requirements, a **maximum of 4 people** will be permitted entry to the public gallery - **places must be booked in advance** by contacting the Committee Manager on the contact details above.

The business to be transacted is set out below.

Yours sincerely



**Mathew Buckley**  
**Monitoring Officer & Secretary to Fire Authority**

Enc.

## **A G E N D A**

Business	Page Number	Lead	Primary Action Requested
<b><u>Procedural</u></b>			
1. Apologies for absence	-	Monitoring Officer/ Secretary	To record
2. Declarations of Interest (Members and Officers)	-	Monitoring Officer/ Secretary	To declare and withdraw if pecuniary
3. Minutes of the meeting of 7 March 2022	(pages 1 - 7)	Chairperson	To approve

Business	Page Number	Lead	Primary Action Requested
4. Matters arising from the Minutes, other than on the Agenda	-	Chairperson	To raise
<b><u>Governance</u></b>			
5. Update: Matters Arising/ Feedback from Fire Authority	verbal	Chairperson and Monitoring Officer/ Secretary	To consider and make any recommendations to the HFA
6. Draft Annual Governance Statement 2021/22	(pages 8 - 18)	Chairperson and Monitoring Officer/ Secretary	To consider and make any recommendations to the HFA
7. Fire Authority Member Code of Conduct	(pages 19 - 53)	Chairperson and Monitoring Officer/ Secretary	To consider and make any recommendations to the HFA
<b><u>Audit</u></b>			
8. Draft Internal Audit Report 2021/22	(pages 54 - 58)	Internal Audit (TIAA)	To consider and make any recommendations to the HFA
<b><u>Finance and Performance</u></b>			
9. Management Accounts for the Period Ending 28 February 2022	(pages 59 - 68)	Head of Finance	To consider and make any recommendations to the HFA
<b><u>Scrutiny Programme</u></b>			
10. Anti-Bullying Campaign (Progress Update)	(pages 69 - 81)	Executive Director of People and Development	To consider and make any recommendations to the HFA
11. GAS Committee Scrutiny Programme 2022/23 (Shortlist of Items from HFA)	(pages 82 - 84)	Monitoring Officer/Secretary	To approve
12. Any Other Business	-	All Members	To raise

Under the Openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations 2014 members of the public may film, record, take photographs or use social networking during Authority and committee meetings that are open to the public. *The Monitoring Officer/Secretary kindly requests advance warning from anyone wishing to film, record or take photographs during open meetings so that suitable provision can be made.*

**HUMBERSIDE FIRE AUTHORITY**  
**GOVERNANCE, AUDIT AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

**7 March 2022**

**PRESENT:** Independent Co-opted Members Mr D Chapman (Chairperson), Mr J Doyle, Mr A Smith and Mrs M Thomlinson.

Councillor Briggs and Councillor Green attended as observers.

Chris Blacksell - Chief Fire Officer/Chief Executive, Phil Shillito - Deputy Chief Fire Officer/Executive Director of Corporate Services, Matthew Sutcliffe - Temporary Director of Service Improvement, Steve Topham - Director of Emergency Response, Martyn Ransom - Head of Finance, Simon Rhodes - Head of Corporate Assurance, Jason Kirby - Emergency Response Special Project Lead, Lisa Nicholson - Monitoring Officer/Secretary, and Samm Campbell - Committee Manager were also present. Andy McCulloch - Internal Audit (TIAA) and Ross Woodley (Mazars) attended remotely.

The meeting was held at the Humberside Fire and Rescue Service Headquarters, Kingston upon Hull. Meeting commenced at 10.00 a.m.

**PROCEDURAL**

**15/22 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE** - Apologies for absence were received from Mrs P Jackson.

**16/22 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST** - There were no declarations of interest.

**17/22 MINUTES - *Resolved*** - That the minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 7 February 2022 be confirmed as a correct record.

**18/22 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES, OTHER THAN ON THE AGENDA** - There were no matters arising from the minutes.

**GOVERNANCE**

**19/22 UPDATE: MATTERS ARISING/FEEDBACK FROM FIRE AUTHORITY** - The Monitoring Officer/Secretary provided feedback on items considered by the Fire Authority at its meeting of 11 February 2022.

***Resolved*** - That the update be received.

**Audit**

**20/22 DRAFT INTERNAL AUDIT PLAN 2022/23** - Andy McCulloch (TIAA) presented the draft Internal Audit Plan 2022/23.

The internal audit process in 2022/23 would involve a mixed approach, with some work undertaken in-person and other aspects undertaken remotely. The Plan incorporated some purposeful gaps in order that it could be amended to account for the outcomes of the Service's recent inspection by HMICFRS when the resulting report was published in summer 2022.

***Resolved*** - That the draft Internal Audit Plan 2022/23 be received.

**21/22 EXTERNAL AUDIT UPDATE** - Ross Woodley (Mazars) presented a report updating the Committee on progress in relation to the external audit process.

The delays in external audit processes nationally, resulting from the Covid-19 pandemic and chronic staffing issues in the sector, had continued and were likely to continue into the following financial year. As a result, the deadline for the publication of final audited accounts for the 2021/22 financial year had been set for 30 November 2022. CIPFA had also recommended that external audit firms temporarily simplify the accounts in order that more might be published in line with the revised deadlines. In terms of performance, the Service had successfully reduced the number of fires in the Humberside area at a rate higher than the national average, and it had continued to perform well in relation to its response times.

**Resolved -** That the update be received.

**22/22 EXTERNAL AUDIT STRATEGY MEMORANDUM** - Ross Woodley (Mazars) presented the External Audit Strategy Memorandum for the year ending 31 March 2022.

The Audit Strategy Memorandum had not significantly changed compared to those of previous years. Most of the associated work was planned for June and July 2022 and the Service was likely to sign off its accounts earlier than many other organisations. The Memorandum focussed on the same three key risks as it had in the previous year, all of which were standard risks for fire and rescue services. Mazars had expressed no concerns around value for money and the audit process would take into account the outcomes of the Service's recent inspection by HMICFRS when the report was published in summer 2022. Mazars expected no changes to the currently agreed fees, and no changes to the Service's materiality.

**Resolved -** That the External Audit Strategy Memorandum be received.

### **FINANCE AND PERFORMANCE**

**23/22 TREASURY MANAGEMENT AND CAPITAL EXPENDITURE STRATEGY 2022/23** - The Head of Finance presented a report summarising the Service's Treasury Management and Capital Expenditure Strategy 2022/23.

Changes to relevant regulations meant that the Committee would begin to receive quarterly updates in relation to treasury management. Geopolitical circumstances had changed significantly between the Strategy being written and the current meeting. Equity markets, gas, oil, and economic growth in general had all been significantly negatively affected by the Russian invasion of Ukraine.

The report presented the planned capital expenditures for the following five years. The Service was currently under-borrowed in relation to its policies, having taken out £3m in long-term borrowing to take advantage of low rates.

**Resolved -** That the report be received.

**24/22 HMICFRS INSPECTION UPDATE** - The Temporary Director of Service Improvement provided the Committee with a verbal update in relation to Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Service's (HMICFRS).

HMICFRS had conducted more than 100 staff interviews during the inspection process, alongside staff forums at all levels within the organisation. The Service was yet to receive a draft of the Inspectorate's report, but the initial impressions received through the debrief at the end of the inspection were positive. It was likely that the Service would receive the draft report in May 2022.

- Resolved -** (a) That the update be received, and
- (b) that the Service's workforce be congratulated on its effort and good work ahead of the recent inspection by HMICFRS.

### **SCRUTINY PROGRAMME**

**25/22 WORKFORCE MONITORING AND PLANNING (REVISION OF WORKFORCE PLAN)** - The Emergency Response Special Project Lead submitted a report in response to the scope within the Committee's Scrutiny Programme for 2021/22.

For the majority of the 2021/22 financial year, the Service had continued to work in accordance with its existing Workforce Plan, which it was also in the process of revising. However, with the recent appointment of a permanent Executive Director of People and Development, the Service paused its work on the revision of the Plan and focussed on some of the underlying work.

The Service's recruitment and talent pipeline processes (Minute 84/21 refers) had continued to work effectively and workforce planning was reported regularly to the Strategic Leadership Team. The Service was in the process of reviewing its retirement profile and planning its future recruitment and promotion activity. HMICFRS's initial feedback following its recent inspection was that the Service had in place effective workforce planning processes, and a related internal audit of workforce planning the previous year had yielded a judgement of 'reasonable assurance'.

In relation to the impact of the Service's Positive Action work, it was broadly in line with the average workforce profile nationally. The Service had a slightly higher proportion of women in its workforce than the national average, but a slightly lower proportion of ethnic minority groups. The effects of the Service's efforts in Positive Action would take years to manifest fully, but the most recent round of recruitment had yielded encouraging results. Targeted Positive Action initiatives included Rookie Reds, which looked to encourage people from a variety of backgrounds to work with the Service by helping them to develop the skills and knowledge they would need to succeed during the recruitment process. The Service had addressed the Committee's recommendations resulting from its consideration of diversity and recruitment at its meeting of 12 April 2021 (Minute 39/21 refers), many of which represented ongoing workstreams.

Members raised the following points:

- Exit Interviews - The Service continued to offer exit interviews to both leavers retirees, with the outcomes monitored and any highlighted issues followed up by HR Partners. The Service had taken action in relation to three or four points raised through 14 exit interviews in the most recent period.
- Protected Characteristics - The Service monitored the protected characteristics of those leaving the workforce as well as those joining it to identify whether it was losing any representation in the workforce disproportionately. The Service had adopted a similar approach to its recruitment processes to identify whether any stages of recruitment were eliminating applicants disproportionately, and it was prepared to adapt its processes to ensure that they were fair and appropriate.
- Partnership Working - The Service worked with a variety of organisations alongside the National Fire Chiefs Council, including Women in the Fire Service and the Asian Fire Service Association. Both groups focussed on supporting members and helping people to become part of the workforce nationally.

- Career Development - The Service offered a number of initiatives to develop individual staff members' careers, including secondment opportunities with organisations such as Humberside Police. This work was undertaken on an individual basis through the Service's personal development review process and numerous opportunities had been considered at a variety of organisations in recent years. The Service was considering the development of a scheme for high-potential individuals as part of its revision of the Workforce Plan.

**Resolved** - (a) That the Service's ongoing progress in diversifying its workforce be praised, and

(b) that the Committee take assurance from the work undertaken by the Service to improve its approach to workforce monitoring and planning.

**26/22 GAS COMMITTEE SCRUTINY PROGRAMME 2021/22** - The Committee Manager submitted a report summarising the Committee's Scrutiny Programme 2021/22.

**Resolved** - That the Programme be received.

**27/22 ANY OTHER BUSINESS - ENDS OF TERMS OF OFFICE** - The Chairperson reminded those present that the current meeting would be the last for three Members whose terms of office would expire prior to the meeting due to be held on 11 April 2022: Mr D Chapman, Mr A Smith and Mrs M Thomlinson. Alongside Mr M Allingham and Mr C Vertigans (whose terms of office had expired on 31 March 2021), Mr D Chapman, Mr A Smith and Mrs M Thomlinson had been present at the Committee's inaugural meeting on 12 October 2012. The Chairperson thanked Members for their dedicated service and thanked officers and internal and external auditors for their support to the Committee.

**Resolved** - That the Committee thank Mr M Allingham, Mr D Chapman, Mr A Smith, Mrs M Thomlinson and Mr C Vertigans for their years of dedicated service and hard work.

*Following the meeting, the Chairperson of Humberside Fire Authority offered the Authority's thanks to Mr D Chapman, Mr A Smith and Mrs M Thomlinson for their work and service spanning the decade since the Committee's inaugural meeting and presented them with plaques alongside the Chief Fire Officer.*

Date	Item	Minute	Resolution	Responsible	Brief summary of outcome
12 April 2021	Draft Annual Governance Statement	37/21	<p><b>Resolved -</b> (b) that the draft Annual Governance Statement be updated to incorporate recent changes to the Committee's membership, and</p> <p>(c) that the Chair of the HFA and the Monitoring Officer consider an appraisal process for the GAS Committee.</p>	Director of Service Improvement	(b) The Annual Governance Statement was updated prior to its receipt by the Fire Authority.
12 April 2021	Diversity and Recruitment - Progress and Plans	39/21	<p><b>Resolved -</b> (a) That the Service's future Positive Action Strategy and Framework be applied consistently;</p> <p>(b) that the Service ensure that its employees fully understand its Positive Action Strategy and Framework;</p> <p>(c) that the Service gather improved data in order to understand the makeup of its workforce in comparison to local demographics and other fire and rescue services;</p> <p>(d) that the Service improve its exit interview process to understand why employees leave the Service, and</p> <p>(e) that the Committee be updated about to the Service's progress in relation to the revision of its workforce plan and the recommendations of the associated internal audit report.</p>	Temporary Director of People and Development	
14 June 2021	Annual Statement of Accounts (Unaudited)	51/21	<p><b>Resolved -</b> (b) that the Annual Statement of Accounts for 2020/21 be updated in response to the Committee's recommended amendments.</p>	Head of Finance	The Annual Statement of Accounts for 2020/21 was updated prior to its receipt by the Fire Authority.
14 June 2021	Draft GAS Committee Scrutiny Programme 2021/22	55/21	<p><b>Resolved -</b> (a) That the Programme be approved subject to the addition of a reference to feedback on promotion processes received through exit-</p>	Committee Manager	The scope was updated and received at the meeting held on 5 July 2021

			interviews on the scope of the item due to be heard on 6 September 2021.		
5 July 2021	Anti-Bullying Campaign	70/21	<p><b>Resolved -</b></p> <p>(a) That the Service use its exit interviews and appraisals process to develop a clearer understanding bullying and changes to its organisational culture;</p> <p>(b) that initial feedback on the progress of recommendation (a) be reported during the follow-up anti-bullying campaign item due to be heard on 11 April 2022;</p> <p>(c) that the Service obtain high-quality data through a survey of staff in order to develop a clearer understanding of bullying and organisational culture than that afforded by the HMICFRS surveys of 2018 and 2020, and</p> <p>(d) that the report for the follow-up anti-bullying campaign item contain feedback from the relevant unions.</p>	Temporary Director of People and Development	
5 July 2021	GAS Committee Scrutiny Programme 2021/22	71/21	<p><b>Resolved -</b></p> <p>(a) That the Programme be updated in accordance with Minute 70/21.</p>	Committee Manager	The Programme was updated and received at the meeting held on 6 September 2021.
6 September 2021	Internal Audit Reports	79/21	<p><b>Resolved -</b></p> <p>(b) That TIAA report on the progress made in relation to the Risk-Based Inspection Programme in spring 2022.</p>	TIAA	
6 September 2021	Promotion within Uniformed Roles	84/21	<p><b>Resolved -</b></p> <p>(a) That the Committee be provided with details of the number of applications to the talent pipeline process for each role, the number of successful promotions, and the number of applicants who had needed to reapply, and</p> <p>(b) that the Committee reconsider promotion within uniformed roles as part of a future scrutiny programme.</p>	<p>(a) Temporary Director of People and Development</p> <p>(b) Committee Manager</p>	(a) The Committee was provided with the update prior to the meeting held on 15 November 2021



15 November 2021	Treasury Management Mid-Year Report 2021/22	95/21	<b>Resolved -</b> that an update session in relation to treasury management be scheduled for the Committee in April 2022.	Head of Finance	
15 November 2021	Implementation of the NFCC Core Code of Ethics	97/21	<b>Resolved -</b> (a) That the Committee be updated on the Service's progress on the implementation of the Core Code of Ethics in six months, including comparative data and feedback from staff;  (b) that the criterion relating to the Chief Fire Officer in the Gap Analysis for the implementation of the Code be moved to the top of the list of criteria, and  (c) that regular update reports detailing the Service's progress in implementing the Code, and the effectiveness of the Code, be submitted to the Fire Authority every six months.	Executive Director of Human Resources	
7 February 2022	Management of Risk at On-Call Fire Stations	12/22	<b>Resolved -</b> (a) That the Committee be provided with further details on the number of high and very high risk site-specific risk information records;  (b) that the Committee be updated on progress made against the internal audit report, and  (c) that the Committee be updated concerning the procurement of software.	Director of Emergency Response	



**Governance, Audit and Scrutiny Committee**  
**11 April 2022**

**Report by the Monitoring  
 Officer/Secretary and Director of  
 Service Improvement**

## **DRAFT ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT 2021/22**

### **REPORT EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The CIPFA/SOLACE good governance framework brought together a number of governance principles and requirements, including replacing the previous Statement of Internal Control with a new Annual Governance Statement (AGS) from 2007/08.

The AGS takes account of CIPFA Bulletin 06 issued 11 February 2021 providing guidance relevant for the annual review of the system of internal control and publication of the Annual Governance Statement (AGS). This guidance concerns the impact of the continuing Covid-19 pandemic on governance in local government bodies and the requirements of the Delivering Good Governance in Local Government Framework 2016 CIPFA and Solace (the Framework). It also takes into account the introduction of the CIPFA Financial Management Code 2019 (FM Code) during 2020/21.

This paper sets out a draft AGS in respect to 2021/22. Given the content of the Statement, it is felt desirable that the Governance, Audit and Scrutiny Committee should specifically review the AGS separate from the Annual Accounts, although the AGS will form part of the Annual Accounts (Audited) once approved in July 2022.

It is also desirable that the Committee receive this report in advance of the draft Annual Accounts at the June 2022 Governance, Audit and Scrutiny Committee meeting.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The Committee is asked to review the Annual Governance Statement for 2021/22 and make any recommendations to the Fire Authority as necessary.

### THE ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT – A REFRESHER

2. Regulation 4 of the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2003 required the Humberside Fire Authority to conduct an annual review of the effectiveness of its system of internal control and publish a Statement of Internal Control (SIC) up until 2006/07.
3. From 1 April 2007 the SIC was replaced by the AGS. Guidance was issued by the CIPFA Finance Advisory Network in respect to the production of the AGS. In addition, guidance has also been set out in the CIPFA/SOLACE good governance framework.
4. The six key principles of good governance as laid down in the 2007 framework have been reviewed within the 2016 framework and re-issued as seven key principles:
  - (i) Behaving with integrity, demonstrating strong commitment to ethical values. And respecting the rule of law.
  - (ii) Ensuring openness and comprehensive stakeholder engagement.
  - (iii) Defining outcomes in terms of sustainable economic, social, and environmental benefits.
  - (iv) Determining the interventions necessary to optimise the achievement of the intended outcomes.
  - (v) Developing the entity's capacity, including the capability of its leadership and the individuals within it.
  - (vi) Managing risks and performance through robust internal control and strong public financial management.
  - (vii) Implementing good practices in transparency, reporting, and audit to deliver effective accountability.
5. In essence the AGS is the formal Statement (signed by the Chairperson of the Humberside Fire Authority, the Chief Fire Officer and Chief Executive and the Statutory Officers) that recognises, records and publishes the governance arrangements of the Humberside Fire Authority in line with that new framework. The AGS is much broader than the SIC, although the overall assurance process remains. The AGS must reflect the governance framework.
6. The assurances in respect to the AGS derive from the following:-
  - Internal Audit
  - S.151 Officer
  - Secretary/Monitoring Officer
  - Strategic Leadership
  - Members
  - External Audit – through assessment
  - Third parties, including partnership arrangements
7. There is no model AGS, but rather the Guidance sets out best practice in developing an AGS.
8. The production of the AGS dovetails strongly with corporate risk management and the Annual Audit Report from Internal Audit.

9. Attached at Appendix 1 is the draft AGS. This is in draft form at present and will be concluded in readiness for the approval of the Annual Accounts in July 2022.

#### STRATEGIC PLAN COMPATIBILITY

10. This report underpins good governance arrangements, which is an enabler of the current Strategic Plan.

#### FINANCIAL/RESOURCES/VALUE FOR MONEY IMPLICATIONS

11. None arising directly.

#### LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

12. This report and attachments ensures that the Fire Authority complies with regulation 4(2) of the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2003 as amended 2006 and 2011.

#### EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT/HR IMPLICATIONS

13. Assurances are provided regarding adoption and maintenance of Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) requirements.

#### CORPORATE RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

14. Corporate Risk and Opportunity Management is a key element of good governance action planning.

#### HEALTH AND SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

15. None arising directly.

#### COMMUNICATION ACTIONS ARISING

16. The approved version of the AGS is published on the HFRS Website.

#### DETAILS OF CONSULTATION

17. Consultation in producing the AGS has taken place with SLT and the Monitoring Officer.

#### BACKGROUND PAPERS AVAILABLE FOR ACCESS

18. CIPFA/SOLACE – Delivering Good Governance in Local Government – Framework and Guidance Note for English Authorities.

#### RECOMMENDATIONS RESTATED

19. The Committee is asked to review the draft Annual Governance Statement for 2021/22 and make any recommendations to the Fire Authority as necessary.

**M SUTCLIFFE**  
**M BUCKLEY**

Officer Contact: Simon Rhodes      [srhodes@humbersidefire.gov.uk](mailto:srhodes@humbersidefire.gov.uk)  
Head of Corporate Assurance

Mathew Buckley      ☎ 01482 567174  
Monitoring Officer/Secretary

Humberside Fire & Rescue Service  
Summergroves Way  
Kingston upon Hull

SR  
11 April 2022

## **Humberside Fire Authority**

### **DRAFT ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT 2021/22**

#### **Scope of Responsibility**

1. The Humberside Fire Authority (HFA) is responsible for ensuring that its business is conducted in accordance with the law and proper standards and that public money is safeguarded and properly accounted for, and used economically, efficiently and effectively. The HFA also has a duty under the Local Government Act 1999 to make arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the way in which its functions are exercised, having regard to a combination of economy, efficiency and effectiveness.
2. In discharging this overall responsibility, the HFA is responsible for putting in place proper arrangements for the governance of its affairs, facilitating the effective exercise of its functions, which includes arrangements for the management of risk.
3. The HFA has approved and adopted a code of corporate governance applicable to Members, which is consistent with the principles of the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy/Society of Local Authority Chief Executives (CIPFA/SOLACE) Delivering Good Governance in Local Government Framework 2016 Edition. A copy of the code can be obtained from the Secretary to the Fire Authority.
4. The HFA has approved and adopted a set of Principles of Good Conduct for employees.
5. This statement explains how the HFA has complied with the code and also meets the requirements of regulation 4(3) of the Accounts and Audit (England) Regulations 2011 in relation to the publication of an Annual Governance Statement.

#### **The purpose of the governance framework**

6. The governance framework comprises the systems and processes, culture and values, by which the HFA is directed and controlled. The framework demonstrates how the HFA accounts to, engages with and leads within the community. It enables the HFA to monitor the achievement of its strategic objectives and to consider whether those objectives have led to the delivery of appropriate, cost effective services.
7. The system of internal control is a significant part of the governance framework and is designed to manage risk to a reasonable level. It cannot eliminate all risk of failure to achieve policies, aims and objectives and can therefore only provide reasonable and not absolute assurance of effectiveness.
8. The system of internal control is based on an on-going process designed to identify and prioritise the risks to the achievement of the HFA's policies, aims and objectives, to evaluate the likelihood of those risks being realised and the impact should they be realised, and to manage them efficiently, effectively and economically.
9. The governance framework has been in place at the HFA for the year ended 31 March 2022 and up to the date of approval of the Statement of Accounts.

## **The Governance Framework 2021/22**

10. The key elements of the HFA's governance framework included:
- a) The Constitution of the Authority which includes:
    - Committee Membership and Terms of Reference;
    - Scheme of Delegation to Officers;
    - Financial Procedure Rules;
    - Contract Procedure Rules;
    - Members' Code of Conduct;
    - Employees' Code of Conduct;
    - Protocol for Member and Officer relationships;
    - Code of Corporate Governance.
  - b) The Governance, Audit and Scrutiny (GAS) Committee, as well as the HFA itself, received regular reports on the Service's performance arrangements.
  - c) An approved Corporate Risk/Opportunity Management Policy.
  - d) An approved 'Local Code of Corporate Governance' in accordance with the CIPFA/SOLACE Framework for Corporate Governance.
  - e) The designation of the Chief Fire Officer as Chief Executive responsible to the HFA for all aspects of operational management.
  - f) The designation of the Executive Director of Finance and S.151 Officer (Local Government Act 1972) in accordance with Section 112 of the Local Government Finance Act 1988 and conforming with the governance requirements of the CIPFA Statement on the role of the Chief Financial Officer in Local Government (2010).
  - g) The designation of the Secretary as Monitoring Officer with the requirement to report to the full HFA if it is considered that any proposal, decision or omission would give rise to unlawfulness or maladministration.
  - h) The Strategic Leadership Team (SLT) have considered a strategic overview of the HFA control environment including the response to external audit, performance management, strategic planning and scrutiny of Risk and Opportunity Management.
  - i) The production of quarterly Management Accounts which are distributed to all Members of SLT and are considered at the GAS Committee meetings and the HFA.
  - j) The Service and Finance Planning process.
  - k) In accordance with the Service Business Planning Framework the Strategic Plan and Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP) for 2021/24 ensure a three-year plan, linked to financial planning.
  - l) The Strategic Plan 2021/24 includes strategic objectives and Directorate responsibilities. Strategic Plan 2021/24 was approved by HFA in December 2020 following consultation.



- m) The IRMP 2021/24 takes account of the requirements of the 2018 Fire and Rescue National Framework for England, providing a detailed assessment of the risks facing our communities and personnel and the measures taken to mitigate those risks.
- n) Current Anti-Fraud and Corruption, Anti-Bribery and Anti-Money Laundering Policies. We publish these and other such Policies, associated data and information on the HFRS Website under Data Transparency, please follow this [Link](#).
- o) Subscription to the services of whistleblowing charity Protect. Staff are informed of this service via updates in wage slips as well as via the Whistleblowing Policy which is published on the external website.
- p) A Service Improvement Plan has been developed to ensure that improvement areas across the Service are documented, evidenced and regularly reviewed.
- q) Member and Officer Development Programmes. During 2021/22 Officers undertook facilitated supportive leadership development. Access to the T2Hub of Management and Leadership Self Development resources, Continual Professional Development through the Leadership Forum and Guest Speakers and Directors completing the Executive Leadership Programme.
- r) 7 scheduled Member Days to support Member development and awareness conducted as remote sessions during Covid-19 restrictions.
- s) An approved Treasury Management Policy and Prudential Indicators.
- t) An approved HFA Performance and Risk Framework supported by the Performance and Risk Framework Policy and incorporating, amongst others, the following guidance notes:
  - Performance Measurement;
  - Corporate Reporting of Performance;
  - Project and Programme Management;
  - Organisational Risk and Opportunity Management.
- u) A Protective Marking Scheme (based upon the Her Majesty's Government Security Framework).
- v) Implementation of a Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) action plan to implement its priorities. Actions within this plan has been fully integrated within the LGA FRSEF Self-assessment/action planning process and Priorities following consultation.
- w) Aligned service delivery with our Local Authorities (Hull, East Riding, North Lincolnshire and North East Lincolnshire) through District management teams, is helping partnership work and assists us to be closer and more accountable to local communities.
- x) Retention of the Customer Service Excellence Award, conducted in quarter one each year.
- y) Bi-Annual Performance Reports to HFA are published on our Website.
- z) A Pension Board, as required under The Firefighters' Pension Scheme

(Amendment) (Governance) Regulations 2015, was formed in 2015 to oversee compliance in the operation of the Firefighters' Pension Scheme (FPS). The Pension Board met twice during 2021/22.

- aa) The Deputy Chief Fire Officer chairs a Joint Consultative Committee attended by all Representative Bodies to discuss any matters relating to staff terms and conditions.
- bb) Member Champions continue to support functional areas and are invited to attend local District performance meetings and to meet with Directors.
- cc) Consultation on our Council Tax Precept for 2021/22 drew a significant number of responses from our community (2624). This allowed Fire Authority Members to make an informed decision on this matter.
- dd) In line with legislative requirements HFRS published its Gender Pay Gap Report by the end of March 2022.

### **Review of Effectiveness**

- 11. The HFA has responsibility for conducting, at least annually, a review of the effectiveness of its governance framework including the system of internal control. The review of effectiveness is informed by the work of the executive managers within the Authority who have responsibility for the development and maintenance of the governance environment, the head of internal audit's annual report, and also by comments made by the external auditors and other review agencies and inspectorates.
- 12. HFA reviews the effectiveness of the GAS Committee and receives an Annual Report at the HFA Annual General Meeting. A review of the size and role of the GAS Committee was conducted at the HFA Meeting 7 December 2020, membership was reduced from seven to five (upon the completion of terms of office). The HFA Constitution was amended to reflect changes.
- 13. The GAS Committee has continued its scrutiny programme during 2021/22, including the scrutiny of:
  - Effectiveness of the Anti-Bullying Campaign
  - Promotion Process
  - Implementation of the NFCC Core Code of Ethics
  - Management of Risk Information
  - Workforce Planning.
- 14. The induction and training of new Members during 2021/22 has further enabled Members to discharge the functions of the HFA.
- 15. During the 2021/22 financial year, the HFA and Committees met as follows:
  - HFA 9 occasions
  - GAS Committee 7 occasions
  - Pension Board 2 occasions.
- 16. Members of the Pension Board receive reports against a number of key workstreams designed to ensure that the Board operates in compliance with the Pension Regulator's

Code of Practice for Pension Boards, this encompasses three broad areas Governance, Administration and Communication.

17. The review of the effectiveness of the system of internal control is informed by:
- The work of Senior Officers;
  - The work of Internal Audit;
  - Corporate Risk and Opportunity Management;
  - Performance information;
  - The Authority's External Auditor, in their Annual Governance Report, Annual Audit Letter and other reports.

18. Internal Audit has undertaken a number of reviews during 2021/22. The following areas were covered:

- National Operational Guidance
- Full Time Shift System
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion
- Protection Enforcement
- Protection Out of Hours Arrangements
- Key Financial Controls
- Data Quality – Risk Information
- Grievance Management

In response to the Covid-19 pandemic reviews were conducted remotely.

19. The Authority is fully compliant against the CIPFA Financial Management Code. Full compliance against the code became mandatory from 1 April 2022.
20. The overall Head of Internal Audit opinion for the period 1 April 2021 to 31 March 2022 provides Reasonable Assurance.
21. The effectiveness of the governance framework is considered throughout the year by SLT, the GAS Committee and HFA. Much of this is discharged through internal reports such as Management Accounts and Performance Reports as well as the work of Internal and External Audit. Any significant issues are captured via the risk management system and considered by the Fire Authority where appropriate.
22. A comprehensive Assurance Map for the Service has been developed to help inform the work of SLT, the GAS Committee and Internal Audit.

### **Significant Governance Issues 2021/22**

23. Members are assured that the Service has appropriate arrangements in place should use of the powers under the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act (RIPA) 2000 be necessary. There was no use of RIPA or requests for covert surveillance during 2021/22.
24. In February 2016 HMG published the Policing and Crime Bill to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of police forces. The Bill received Royal Assent in January 2017 and the Act now places a statutory duty upon Fire and Rescue, Police and Ambulance services to collaborate. The Act also enables Police and Crime Commissioners (PCC) to take responsibility for fire and rescue services, where a Business Case is formed and there is local public support. We continue to proactively identify collaborative

opportunities with the Police and Ambulance services, and other bodies. This has included:

- A joint Emergency Service Fleet Management workshop with the Police.
  - A joint Estates (Operational and Strategic) function with Humberside Police.
  - Provision of a medical First Responder scheme in partnership with Yorkshire Ambulance (YAS), East Midlands Ambulance Service (EMAS).
  - A Falls Response Team with City Health Care Partnership (CHCP), NHS Hull Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) and Hull City Council.
  - An agreement with Yorkshire Ambulance Service (YAS) for them to provide Service wide Clinical Governance.
  - Memorandums of Understanding with Humberside Police and Ambulance Trusts to support response activities including:
    - Searching for Missing Persons
    - Fire Investigation
    - Forced Entry for Medical Rescues
    - Drone
    - Bariatric
  - An Integrated Health Centre incorporating a Full-Time fire station, in partnership with Hull CCG.
  - A Fire and Police Transformation Board continues to review collaboration opportunities where they are beneficial and practicable.
  - Shared provision of a Health and Safety function with Humberside Police, managed by HFRS.
  - HFRS providing Financial Management support to Humberside PCC.
  - 'Don't Cross the Line' campaign to support stopping attacks on Emergency Service Workers.
25. Following the first inspection of Effectiveness, Efficiency and People, by HMICFRS in November 2018, steps have been taken to react to inspection outcomes and prepare the Service for inspection taking place in 2021/22. This includes development of a Service Improvement Plan and performance monitoring through a Strategic Leadership Team performance meeting held monthly.
26. Review and re-alignment of Strategic Management structure and portfolios to support succession planning and continuous service improvement. Including appointment of an Executive Director of People and Development and an Assistant Chief Fire Officer/ Executive Director of Service Delivery. Re-alignment of portfolios including Deputy Chief Fire Officer/Executive Director of Corporate Services and Executive Director of Finance/S.151 Officer. Re-alignment of Service Deliver Director portfolios to include a dedicated Director of Prevention and Protection and Director of Emergency Response, supplementing the existing Director of Service Improvement.
27. One Whistleblowing complaint was received internally during 2021/22 and was dealt with in accordance with the Whistleblowing Policy. An investigation is currently in progress.

### **Action Plan**

28. Strategic Risk and Opportunity Register  
The action points outlined below are included within our Strategic Risk and Opportunity Register and Action Plan, progress will be monitored throughout 2022/23.

- Incorporation of the Humberside PCC onto the HFA, including any arising changes to governance arrangements and mechanism for PCC to produce Business Case to take over governance of Fire and Rescue
- Continued Scenario Planning to mitigate the effect of any further reductions or challenges on finances
- Workforce Planning
- Cyber Security threats
- Emergency Services Network
- Grenfell Inquiry Outcomes
- Environmental Sustainability
- Impact of COVID-19

29. COVID-19 Pandemic.

The ongoing impact of the pandemic is closely monitored in conjunction with partner agencies and a dynamic/responsive Implementation Management Team is stood up whenever risks are perceived to be increasing, and/or to facilitate requests for assistance from partner agencies.

### **Conclusions**

30. This Annual Governance Statement for 2021/22 provides Members with a high level of assurance for the Authority's governance arrangements.

### **Signed**

.....  
**Chair of the Authority**

.....  
**Chief Fire Officer & Chief Executive**

.....  
**S.151 Officer**

.....  
**Secretary & Monitoring Officer**



**Governance, Audit and Scrutiny Committee**  
**11 April 2022**

**Report by the Monitoring Officer and Secretary**

## **Fire Authority Member Code of Conduct**

### **REPORT EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

Councils are required to adopt a code dealing with the conduct that is expected of Members and co-opted Members when they are acting in their capacity as a Member or co-opted Member of the Authority. The content of the code must be consistent with the seven principles of public life and must include provision in respect of the registration and disclosure of pecuniary and non-pecuniary interests.

Following a series of workshops and consultation processes the Local Government Association has produced a revised model code of conduct this is attached at Appendix A to this report. Humberside Fire Authority needs to consider if it wishes to amend its existing Member Code of Conduct and if so which, if any, elements of the revised model code it should adopt.

A briefing paper has been circulated to Members of the Fire Authority with a draft of a revised Member Code of Conduct for the Fire Authority. Members have been asked for their comments and the content of a revised Member Code of Conduct will be considered at a future meeting of the Fire Authority.

The Governance Audit and Scrutiny Committee are asked to provide feedback to the Fire Authority on the draft Member Code of Conduct

## RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That the Governance Audit and Scrutiny Committee provide feedback to the Fire Authority on the draft Member Code of Conduct

## REPORT DETAIL

2. Councils are required to adopt a code dealing with the conduct that is expected of Members and co-opted Members when they are acting in their capacity as a Member or co-opted Member of the Authority. The content of the code must be consistent with the seven principles of public life and must include provision in respect of the registration and disclosure of pecuniary and non-pecuniary interests.
3. Following a series of workshops and consultation processes the Local Government Association has produced a revised model code of conduct this is attached at Appendix A to this report. Humberside Fire Authority needs to consider if it wishes to amend its existing Member Code of Conduct and if so which, if any, elements of the revised model code it should adopt.
4. A briefing paper has been circulated to Members of the Fire Authority with a draft of a revised Member Code of Conduct for the Fire Authority this is attached at Appendix B to this report. Members have been asked for their comments and the content of a revised Member Code of Conduct will be considered at a future meeting of the Fire Authority.

### Matters for consideration

#### Seven Principles of Public Life / Core Code of Ethics

5. These are included as an appendix to the LGA Code and incorporated into the body of the current code. It is considered that they should be included as a preamble to the code but it should be made clear that they do not form part of the code and complaints relating to breaches of the principles cannot be considered.
6. As part of the feedback on the draft code from Members it has also been suggested that the National Fire Chiefs Council Core Code of Ethics is also included in the Code as this forms the basis of the officer code of conduct and the two codes should reflect each other.

#### Introductory Paragraphs/Scope of the Code

7. The model code opens with a series of introductory statements. Other than the definitions and the paragraph setting out the purpose of the code it is not clear what value the introductory paragraphs add to the code of conduct. It is therefore recommended that they are not included in a revised Code of Conduct.

#### Definitions

8. It is considered that a definition section is a necessary part of a code of conduct. Therefore, this is included.

#### Purpose of the Code of Conduct

9. The principles in this section are covered at present by the last two paragraphs under 'Introduction and Interpretation' in the current code. It is considered that these should be retained.



## General principles of Councillor conduct

10. It is considered that this section should not be included as it will create confusion in the minds of councillors and members of the public. It is clear from the LGA model code that the only parts of the model code whereby a complaint of a failure to comply can be made are those elements that come under the heading 'Standards of Councillor Conduct'. The introductory paragraph to this section states –

*This section sets out your obligations, which are the minimum standards of conduct required of you as a councillor. **Should your conduct fall short of these standards, a complaint may be made against you, which may result in action being taken.***

It is clear therefore that it is only in respect of a breach of the provisions that follow this that a complaint can be made.

11. As this is the case, the inclusion of expected standards of behaviour for Councillors alleged breaches of which cannot be investigated alongside standards of behaviour alleged breaches of which can be investigated within the same document creates a lack of clarity. Councillors will be unclear as to the standards of behaviour to which they are being held and for which they can be subject to investigation and members of the public will be unclear as to those matters they can complain about.

## Application of the Code

12. This section is covered in the current code in the sections headed 'Introduction and Interpretation' and 'Who does this Code apply to and when does it apply'. They set out when the code of conduct applies to members. It is considered that elements of the current code should be retained and the elements of the model code that deal with which types of communications the Code applies to should be included. The reference to social media is considered particularly important.

## General Conduct

13. In terms of the general requirements set out under the Code of Conduct under this heading it is considered that all of these elements should be included. In general, they reflect the requirements of the existing Code of Conduct. There are some amendments that have been made to make the requirements clearer and there are some additional requirements and some amendments to existing requirements. The model code also includes explanatory paragraphs that explain each of the requirements of the Code in more detail and this is considered to be a useful addition to the existing Code of Conduct.
14. One issue that may seem unimportant but is key is the question of whether the requirements of the Code should be expressed in the first person 'I' or in the second person 'You'. The requirements of the existing Code of Conduct are expressed in the second person 'You must'. The requirements of the LGA model code are expressed in the first person 'I will'. The reasoning, it would appear, is that Councillors should be making a commitment to act in a certain way. The problem is that the introductory sections of the LGA model code are set out in the second person and the move to first person seems clunky. It is therefore considered that the code should, as at present, be set out in the second person 'You must'.

## Interests

15. The provisions relating to the registration and declaration of interests are set out in the LGA model code in a separate appendix as opposed to in the main body of the code where (other than the definition of pecuniary interests) they are placed in the current code of conduct. It is suggested that the provisions relating to interests are included in the main body of the code rather than as an appendix. The registration and declaration

of interests are important elements of the code. Members need therefore to be aware of the requirements and they may be missed if they are placed in an appendix.

## Registration of Interests

### Pecuniary Interests

16. The requirement to register pecuniary interests is a statutory requirement. The current code sets out the requirements as does the LGA model code. It is recommended that the current drafting of the Code of Conduct with regard to the registration of pecuniary interests should remain as is drafted subject to the inclusion of the full definition of pecuniary interests in the main body of the code rather than as an appendix.

### Non-Pecuniary Interests

17. The LGA model code contains most of the non-pecuniary interests listed in the current code of conduct as personal interests. The LGA code also includes any unpaid directorships. It is considered that this can be covered by including a requirement to register any voluntary work undertaken by a member which will include unpaid directorships and other voluntary work. It is also considered that the term personal interests should be replaced with the term non-pecuniary interests.

## Actions on Interests

### Pecuniary Interests

18. It is considered that the paragraph in the LGA model code relating to the disclosure of pecuniary interests and the action to be taken in relation to pecuniary interests reflects the existing provisions of the Code and should be adopted.

### Non-Pecuniary Interests

19. The LGA model code of conduct varies from the current code of conduct. it provides that a member with a non-pecuniary interest
- May not speak unless members of the public can speak
  - May not take part in the discussion
  - May not vote
  - Must leave the room

Effectively treating non-pecuniary interests as though they were pecuniary interests.

20. The reasoning for this it not clear. The result would be that Councillors with fairly minor interests in a matter would not be able to take part in debates and would not be able to vote. It is not considered that this is justified and the code of conduct should continue to provide that Councillors with a simple non-pecuniary interests should be allowed to vote. If members have a non-pecuniary interest the nature of which is likely to affect their judgement of the public interest that can be covered by a category of prejudicial interests (see below).

### Non-Registerable Interests

21. The LGA model code then introduces a third category of interests – non registerable interests. The drafting of this section of the LGA model code is a little confused. The intention appears to be to make a distinction between matters that **directly relate** to and matters that **affect** the wellbeing or financial position of certain persons and organisations. It is considered that this distinction will be difficult to understand and it will

be difficult for members of the public to understand if a Councillor has taken the appropriate action.

22. In place of the above it is recommended that the existing code should be amended to set out three categories of interests and actions as set out below –

Interest	Action
Pecuniary Interests	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Declare</li><li>• Leave meeting</li><li>• Do not speak</li><li>• Do not vote</li></ul>
Non-Pecuniary Interests	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Declare</li><li>• Remain in meeting</li><li>• Can speak</li><li>• Can vote</li></ul>
Prejudicial Interests	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Declare</li><li>• Leave meeting</li><li>• Do not speak</li><li>• Do not vote</li></ul>

#### Prejudicial Interests

23. In previous versions of the statutory (pre-2011) code there was a definition of prejudicial interests –

*Where you have a personal interest in any business of your authority you also have a prejudicial interest in that business where the interest is one which a member of the public with knowledge of the relevant facts would reasonably regard as so significant that it is likely to prejudice your judgement of the public interest.*

Members with a prejudicial interest had to declare the interest, leave the meeting, could not speak and could not vote.

24. There were certain circumstances whereby a Councillor was not taken to have a prejudicial interest in a matter including –

- *an allowance, payment or indemnity given to members;*
- *any ceremonial honour given to members; and*
- *setting council tax or a precept under the Local Government Finance Act 1992.*

This meant that Councillors were not prevented from setting the precept or voting on allowances for Councillors. It is not considered that the second category of exemption is relevant to the fire authority therefore it will not be included.

25. It is considered that adding a category of prejudicial interests to the existing code of conduct as set out below along with two of the exceptions as set out above and restrictions on participation will be a clearer way of implementing the provisions of the model code. The new definition of prejudicial interests would be as follows –

*Subject to sub-paragraph (a) below where you have a non-pecuniary interest in any business of your authority you also have a prejudicial interest in that business where the interest is one which a member of the public with knowledge of the relevant facts would reasonably regard as so significant that it is likely to prejudice your judgement of the public interest.*

It is considered that the above sets out a more easily understandable hierarchy of interests that incorporates elements of the model code of conduct.

#### STRATEGIC PLAN COMPATIBILITY

26. The Code of Conduct will support the following Strategic Plan aims –

We treat everyone in an open, fair and equal manner.

We promote our principles and expected behaviours and are ethical, transparent and accountable

#### FINANCIAL/RESOURCES/VALUE FOR MONEY IMPLICATIONS

27. There are no financial implications associated with the adoption of the Code of Conduct.

#### LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

28. Under s 27 of the Localism Act 2011 the Fire Authority are required to adopt a code dealing with the conduct that is expected of members and co-opted members of the authority when they are acting in that capacity.

#### EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT/HR IMPLICATIONS

29. The adoption of the Code will promote equalities by requiring elected Members to treat others with respect and courtesy and not to do anything which may cause the Authority to breach any equality laws.

#### CORPORATE RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

30. None

#### HEALTH AND SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

31. None

#### COMMUNICATION ACTIONS ARISING

32. Under s 28 of the Localism Act 2011 the Fire Authority must publicise its adoption, revision or replacement of a code of conduct in such manner as it considers is likely to bring the adoption, revision or replacement of the code of conduct to the attention of persons who live in its area.

## DETAILS OF CONSULTATION AND/OR COLLABORATION

33. Consultation on the revised Code of Conduct has been carried out with elected Members of the Authority.

## BACKGROUND PAPERS AVAILABLE FOR ACCESS

34. None

## RECOMMENDATIONS RESTATED

35. That the Governance Audit and Scrutiny Committee provide feedback to the Fire Authority on the draft Member Code of Conduct

**M Buckley**

Officer Contact: Mathew Buckley ☎ 01482 393100  
Monitoring Officer and Secretary

Humberside Fire & Rescue Service  
Summergroves Way  
Kingston upon Hull





## **Local Government Association**

### **Model Councillor Code of Conduct 2020**

#### **Joint statement**

The role of councillor across all tiers of local government is a vital part of our country's system of democracy. It is important that as councillors we can be held accountable and all adopt the behaviors and responsibilities associated with the role. Our conduct as an individual councillor affects the reputation of all councillors. We want the role of councillor to be one that people aspire to. We also want individuals from a range of backgrounds and circumstances to be putting themselves forward to become councillors.

As councillors, we represent local residents, work to develop better services and deliver local change. The public have high expectations of us and entrust us to represent our local area; taking decisions fairly, openly, and transparently. We have both an individual and collective responsibility to meet these expectations by maintaining high standards and demonstrating good conduct, and by challenging behaviour which falls below expectations.

Importantly, we should be able to undertake our role as a councillor without being intimidated, abused, bullied or threatened by anyone, including the general public.

This Code has been designed to protect our democratic role, encourage good conduct and safeguard the public's trust in local government.

## **Introduction**

The Local Government Association (LGA) has developed this Model Councillor Code of Conduct, in association with key partners and after extensive consultation with the sector, as part of its work on supporting all tiers of local government to continue to aspire to high standards of leadership and performance. It is a template for councils to adopt in whole and/or with local amendments.

All councils are required to have a local Councillor Code of Conduct.

The LGA will undertake an annual review of this Code to ensure it continues to be fit-for-purpose, incorporating advances in technology, social media and changes in legislation. The LGA can also offer support, training and mediation to councils and councillors on the application of the Code and the National Association of Local Councils (NALC) and the county associations of local councils can offer advice and support to town and parish councils.

## **Definitions**

For the purposes of this Code of Conduct, a “councillor” means a member or co-opted member of a local authority or a directly elected mayor. A “co-opted member” is defined in the Localism Act 2011 Section 27(4) as “a person who is not a member of the authority but who

- a) is a member of any committee or sub-committee of the authority, or;
- b) is a member of, and represents the authority on, any joint committee or joint sub-committee of the authority;

and who is entitled to vote on any question that falls to be decided at any meeting of that committee or sub-committee”.

For the purposes of this Code of Conduct, “local authority” includes county councils, district councils, London borough councils, parish councils, town councils, fire and rescue authorities, police authorities, joint authorities, economic prosperity boards, combined authorities and National Park authorities.

## **Purpose of the Code of Conduct**

The purpose of this Code of Conduct is to assist you, as a councillor, in modelling the behaviour that is expected of you, to provide a personal check and balance, and to set out the type of conduct that could lead to action being taken against you. It is also to protect you, the public, fellow councillors, local authority officers and the reputation of local government. It sets out general principles of conduct expected of all councillors and your specific obligations in relation to standards of conduct. The LGA encourages the use of support, training and mediation prior to action being taken using the Code. The fundamental aim of the Code is to create and maintain public confidence in the role of councillor and local government.



## **General principles of councillor conduct**

Everyone in public office at all levels; all who serve the public or deliver public services, including ministers, civil servants, councillors and local authority officers; should uphold the [Seven Principles of Public Life](#), also known as the Nolan Principles.

Building on these principles, the following general principles have been developed specifically for the role of councillor.

In accordance with the public trust placed in me, on all occasions:

- I act with integrity and honesty
- I act lawfully
- I treat all persons fairly and with respect; and
- I lead by example and act in a way that secures public confidence in the role of councillor.

In undertaking my role:

- I impartially exercise my responsibilities in the interests of the local community
- I do not improperly seek to confer an advantage, or disadvantage, on any person
- I avoid conflicts of interest
- I exercise reasonable care and diligence; and
- I ensure that public resources are used prudently in accordance with my local authority's requirements and in the public interest.

## **Application of the Code of Conduct**

This Code of Conduct applies to you as soon as you sign your declaration of acceptance of the office of councillor or attend your first meeting as a co-opted member and continues to apply to you until you cease to be a councillor.

This Code of Conduct applies to you when you are acting in your capacity as a councillor which may include when:

- you misuse your position as a councillor
- Your actions would give the impression to a reasonable member of the public with knowledge of all the facts that you are acting as a councillor;

The Code applies to all forms of communication and interaction, including:

- at face-to-face meetings
- at online or telephone meetings
- in written communication
- in verbal communication
- in non-verbal communication
- in electronic and social media communication, posts, statements and comments.

You are also expected to uphold high standards of conduct and show leadership at all times when acting as a councillor.

Your Monitoring Officer has statutory responsibility for the implementation of the Code of Conduct, and you are encouraged to seek advice from your Monitoring Officer on any matters that may relate to the Code of Conduct. Town and parish councillors are encouraged to seek advice from their Clerk, who may refer matters to the Monitoring Officer.

## **Standards of councillor conduct**

This section sets out your obligations, which are the minimum standards of conduct required of you as a councillor. Should your conduct fall short of these standards, a complaint may be made against you, which may result in action being taken.

Guidance is included to help explain the reasons for the obligations and how they should be followed.

### **General Conduct**

#### **1. Respect**

##### **As a councillor:**

**1.1 I treat other councillors and members of the public with respect.**

**1.2 I treat local authority employees, employees and representatives of partner organisations and those volunteering for the local authority with respect and respect the role they play.**

Respect means politeness and courtesy in behaviour, speech, and in the written word. Debate and having different views are all part of a healthy democracy. As a councillor, you can express, challenge, criticise and disagree with views, ideas, opinions and policies in a robust but civil manner. You should not, however, subject individuals, groups of people or organisations to personal attack.

In your contact with the public, you should treat them politely and courteously. Rude and offensive behaviour lowers the public's expectations and confidence in councillors.

In return, you have a right to expect respectful behaviour from the public. If members of the public are being abusive, intimidatory or threatening you are entitled to stop any conversation or interaction in person or online and report them to the local authority, the relevant social media provider or the police. This also applies to fellow councillors, where action could then be taken under the Councillor Code of Conduct, and local authority employees, where concerns should be raised in line with the local authority's councillor-officer protocol.

## **2. Bullying, harassment and discrimination**

### **As a councillor:**

#### **2.1 I do not bully any person.**

#### **2.2 I do not harass any person.**

#### **2.3 I promote equalities and do not discriminate unlawfully against any person.**

The Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service (ACAS) characterises bullying as offensive, intimidating, malicious or insulting behaviour, an abuse or misuse of power through means that undermine, humiliate, denigrate or injure the recipient. Bullying might be a regular pattern of behaviour or a one-off incident, happen face-to-face, on social media, in emails or phone calls, happen in the workplace or at work social events and may not always be obvious or noticed by others.

The Protection from Harassment Act 1997 defines harassment as conduct that causes alarm or distress or puts people in fear of violence and must involve such conduct on at least two occasions. It can include repeated attempts to impose unwanted communications and contact upon a person in a manner that could be expected to cause distress or fear in any reasonable person.

Unlawful discrimination is where someone is treated unfairly because of a protected characteristic. Protected characteristics are specific aspects of a person's identity defined by the Equality Act 2010. They are age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

The Equality Act 2010 places specific duties on local authorities. Councillors have a central role to play in ensuring that equality issues are integral to the local authority's performance and strategic aims, and that there is a strong vision and public commitment to equality across public services.

### **3. Impartiality of officers of the council**

**As a councillor:**

#### **3.1 I do not compromise, or attempt to compromise, the impartiality of anyone who works for, or on behalf of, the local authority.**

Officers work for the local authority as a whole and must be politically neutral (unless they are political assistants). They should not be coerced or persuaded to act in a way that would undermine their neutrality. You can question officers in order to understand, for example, their reasons for proposing to act in a particular way, or the content of a report that they have written. However, you must not try and force them to act differently, change their advice, or alter the content of that report, if doing so would prejudice their professional integrity.

### **4. Confidentiality and access to information**

**As a councillor:**

#### **4.1 I do not disclose information:**

- a. given to me in confidence by anyone**
- b. acquired by me which I believe, or ought reasonably to be aware, is of a confidential nature, unless**
  - i. I have received the consent of a person authorised to give it;**
  - ii. I am required by law to do so;**
  - iii. the disclosure is made to a third party for the purpose of obtaining professional legal advice provided that the third party agrees not to disclose the information to any other person; or**
  - iv. the disclosure is:**
    - 1. reasonable and in the public interest; and**
    - 2. made in good faith and in compliance with the reasonable requirements of the local authority; and**
    - 3. I have consulted the Monitoring Officer prior to its release.**

#### **4.2 I do not improperly use knowledge gained solely as a result of my role as a councillor for the advancement of myself, my friends, my family members, my employer or my business interests.**

#### **4.3 I do not prevent anyone from getting information that they are entitled to by law.**

Local authorities must work openly and transparently, and their proceedings and printed materials are open to the public, except in certain legally defined circumstances. You should work on this basis, but there will be times when it is required by law that discussions, documents and other information relating to or held by the local authority must be treated in a confidential manner. Examples include personal data relating to individuals or information relating to ongoing negotiations.

## **5. Disrepute**

**As a councillor:**

### **5.1 I do not bring my role or local authority into disrepute.**

As a Councillor, you are trusted to make decisions on behalf of your community and your actions and behaviour are subject to greater scrutiny than that of ordinary members of the public. You should be aware that your actions might have an adverse impact on you, other councillors and/or your local authority and may lower the public's confidence in you or your local authority's ability to discharge your/its functions. For example, behaviour that is considered dishonest and/or deceitful can bring your local authority into disrepute.

You are able to hold the local authority and fellow councillors to account and are able to constructively challenge and express concern about decisions and processes undertaken by the council whilst continuing to adhere to other aspects of this Code of Conduct.

## **6. Use of position**

**As a councillor:**

### **6.1 I do not use, or attempt to use, my position improperly to the advantage or disadvantage of myself or anyone else.**

Your position as a member of the local authority provides you with certain opportunities, responsibilities and privileges, and you make choices all the time that will impact others. However, you should not take advantage of these opportunities to further your own or others' private interests or to disadvantage anyone unfairly.

## **7. Use of local authority resources and facilities**

**As a councillor:**

### **7.1 I do not misuse council resources.**

### **7.2 I will, when using the resources of the local or authorising their use by others:**

- a. act in accordance with the local authority's requirements; and**
- b. ensure that such resources are not used for political purposes unless that use could reasonably be regarded as likely to facilitate, or be conducive to, the discharge of the functions of the local authority or of the office to which I have been elected or appointed.**

You may be provided with resources and facilities by the local authority to assist you in carrying out your duties as a councillor.

Examples include:

- office support
- stationery
- equipment such as phones, and computers
- transport
- access and use of local authority buildings and rooms.

These are given to you to help you carry out your role as a councillor more effectively and are not to be used for business or personal gain. They should be used in accordance with the purpose for which they have been provided and the local authority's own policies regarding their use.

## **8. Complying with the Code of Conduct**

### **As a Councillor:**

**8.1 I undertake Code of Conduct training provided by my local authority.**

**8.2 I cooperate with any Code of Conduct investigation and/or determination.**

**8.3 I do not intimidate or attempt to intimidate any person who is likely to be involved with the administration of any investigation or proceedings.**

**8.4 I comply with any sanction imposed on me following a finding that I have breached the Code of Conduct.**

It is extremely important for you as a councillor to demonstrate high standards, for you to have your actions open to scrutiny and for you not to undermine public trust in the local authority or its governance. If you do not understand or are concerned about the local authority's processes in handling a complaint you should raise this with your Monitoring Officer.

## **Protecting your reputation and the reputation of the local authority**

## **9. Interests**

### **As a councillor:**

**9.1 I register and disclose my interests.**

Section 29 of the Localism Act 2011 requires the Monitoring Officer to establish and maintain a register of interests of members of the authority .

You need to register your interests so that the public, local authority employees and fellow councillors know which of your interests might give rise to a conflict of interest. The register is a public document that can be consulted when (or before) an issue arises. The register also protects you by allowing you to demonstrate openness and a willingness to be held accountable. You are personally responsible for deciding whether or not you should disclose an interest in a meeting, but it can be helpful for you to know early on if others think that a potential conflict might arise. It is also important that the public know about any interest that might have to be disclosed by you or other councillors when making or taking part in decisions, so that decision making is seen by the public as open and honest. This helps to ensure that public confidence in the integrity of local governance is maintained.

You should note that failure to register or disclose a disclosable pecuniary interest as set out in Table 1, is a criminal offence under the Localism Act 2011.

Appendix B sets out the detailed provisions on registering and disclosing interests. If in doubt, you should always seek advice from your Monitoring Officer.

## **10. Gifts and hospitality**

**As a councillor:**

- 10.1 I do not accept gifts or hospitality, irrespective of estimated value, which could give rise to real or substantive personal gain or a reasonable suspicion of influence on my part to show favour from persons seeking to acquire, develop or do business with the local authority or from persons who may apply to the local authority for any permission, licence or other significant advantage.**
- 10.2 I register with the Monitoring Officer any gift or hospitality with an estimated value of at least £50 within 28 days of its receipt.**
- 10.3 I register with the Monitoring Officer any significant gift or hospitality that I have been offered but have refused to accept.**

In order to protect your position and the reputation of the local authority, you should exercise caution in accepting any gifts or hospitality which are (or which you reasonably believe to be) offered to you because you are a councillor. The presumption should always be not to accept significant gifts or hospitality. However, there may be times when such a refusal may be difficult if it is seen as rudeness in which case you could accept it but must ensure it is publicly registered. However, you do not need to register gifts and hospitality which are not related to your role as a councillor, such as Christmas gifts from your friends and family. It is also important to note that it is appropriate to accept normal expenses and hospitality associated with your duties as a councillor. If you are unsure, do contact your Monitoring Officer for guidance.

## **Appendices**

### **Appendix A – The Seven Principles of Public Life**

The principles are:

#### **Selflessness**

Holders of public office should act solely in terms of the public interest.

#### **Integrity**

Holders of public office must avoid placing themselves under any obligation to people or organisations that might try inappropriately to influence them in their work. They should not act or take decisions in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family, or their friends. They must disclose and resolve any interests and relationships.

#### **Objectivity**

Holders of public office must act and take decisions impartially, fairly and on merit, using the best evidence and without discrimination or bias.

#### **Accountability**

Holders of public office are accountable to the public for their decisions and actions and must submit themselves to the scrutiny necessary to ensure this.

#### **Openness**

Holders of public office should act and take decisions in an open and transparent manner. Information should not be withheld from the public unless there are clear and lawful reasons for so doing.

#### **Honesty**

Holders of public office should be truthful.

#### **Leadership**

Holders of public office should exhibit these principles in their own behaviour. They should actively promote and robustly support the principles and be willing to challenge poor behaviour wherever it occurs.



## Appendix B Registering

### interests

Within 28 days of becoming a member or your re-election or re-appointment to office you must register with the Monitoring Officer the interests which fall within the categories set out in **Table 1 (Disclosable Pecuniary Interests)** which are as described in "The Relevant Authorities (Disclosable Pecuniary Interests) Regulations 2012". You should also register details of your other personal interests which fall within the categories set out in **Table 2 (Other Registerable Interests)**.

**"Disclosable pecuniary interest"** means an interest of yourself, or of your partner if you are aware of your partner's interest, within the descriptions set out in Table 1 below.

**"Partner"** means a spouse or civil partner, or a person with whom you are living as husband or wife, or a person with whom you are living as if you are civil partners.

1. You must ensure that your register of interests is kept up-to-date and within 28 days of becoming aware of any new interest, or of any change to a registered interest, notify the Monitoring Officer.
2. A 'sensitive interest' is as an interest which, if disclosed, could lead to the councillor, or a person connected with the councillor, being subject to violence or intimidation.
3. Where you have a 'sensitive interest' you must notify the Monitoring Officer with the reasons why you believe it is a sensitive interest. If the Monitoring Officer agrees they will withhold the interest from the public register.

### Non participation in case of disclosable pecuniary interest

4. Where a matter arises at a meeting which directly relates to one of your Disclosable Pecuniary Interests as set out in **Table 1**, you must disclose the interest, not participate in any discussion or vote on the matter and must not remain in the room unless you have been granted a dispensation. If it is a 'sensitive interest', you do not have to disclose the nature of the interest, just that you have an interest. Dispensation may be granted in limited circumstances, to enable you to participate and vote on a matter in which you have a disclosable pecuniary interest.
5. Where you have a disclosable pecuniary interest on a matter to be considered or is being considered by you as a Cabinet member in exercise of your executive function, you must notify the Monitoring Officer of the interest and must not take any steps or further steps in the matter apart from arranging for someone else to deal with it

### Disclosure of Other Registerable Interests

6. Where a matter arises at a meeting which **directly relates** to one of your Other Registerable Interests (as set out in Table 2), you must disclose the interest. You may speak on the matter only if members of the public are also allowed to speak at the meeting but otherwise must not take part in any discussion or vote on the matter and must not remain in the room unless you have been granted a dispensation. If it

is a 'sensitive interest', you do not have to disclose the nature of the interest.

## Disclosure of Non-Registerable Interests

7. Where a matter arises at a meeting which **directly relates** to your financial interest or well-being (and is not a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest set out in Table 1) or a financial interest or well-being of a relative or close associate, you must disclose the interest. You may speak on the matter only if members of the public are also allowed to speak at the meeting but otherwise must not take part in any discussion or vote on the matter and must not remain in the room unless you have been granted a dispensation. If it is a 'sensitive interest', you do not have to disclose the nature of the interest.

8. Where a matter arises at a meeting which **affects** –

- a. your own financial interest or well-being;
- b. a financial interest or well-being of a friend, relative, close associate; or
- c. a body included in those you need to disclose under Disclosable Pecuniary Interests as set out in **Table 1**

you must disclose the interest. In order to determine whether you can remain in the meeting after disclosing your interest the following test should be applied

9. Where a matter **affects** your financial interest or well-being:

- a. to a greater extent than it affects the financial interests of the majority of inhabitants of the ward affected by the decision and;
- b. a reasonable member of the public knowing all the facts would believe that it would affect your view of the wider public interest

You may speak on the matter only if members of the public are also allowed to speak at the meeting but otherwise must not take part in any discussion or vote on the matter and must not remain in the room unless you have been granted a dispensation.

If it is a 'sensitive interest', you do not have to disclose the nature of the interest.

10. Where you have a personal interest in any business of your authority and you have made an executive decision in relation to that business, you must make sure that any written statement of that decision records the existence and nature of your interest.

**Table 1: Disclosable Pecuniary Interests**

This table sets out the explanation of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests as set out in the [Relevant Authorities \(Disclosable Pecuniary Interests\) Regulations 2012](#).

<b>Subject</b>	<b>Description</b>
<b>Employment, office, trade, profession or vocation</b>	Any employment, office, trade, profession or vocation carried on for profit or gain. [Any unpaid directorship.]
<b>Sponsorship</b>	Any payment or provision of any other financial benefit (other than from the council) made to the councillor during the previous 12-month period for expenses incurred by him/her in carrying out his/her duties as a councillor, or towards his/her election expenses. This includes any payment or financial benefit from a trade union within the meaning of the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992.
<b>Contracts</b>	Any contract made between the councillor or his/her spouse or civil partner or the person with whom the

	<p>councillor is living as if they were spouses/civil partners (or a firm in which such person is a partner, or an incorporated body of which such person is a director* or a body that such person has a beneficial interest in the securities of*) and the council —</p> <p>(a) under which goods or services are to be provided or works are to be executed; and</p> <p>(b) which has not been fully discharged.</p>
<b>Land and Property</b>	<p>Any beneficial interest in land which is within the area of the council.</p> <p>‘Land’ excludes an easement, servitude, interest or right in or over land which does not give the councillor or his/her spouse or civil partner or the person with whom the councillor is living as if they were spouses/civil partners (alone or jointly with another) a right to occupy or to receive income.</p>
<b>Licenses</b>	<p>Any licence (alone or jointly with others) to occupy land in the area of the council for a month or longer</p>
<b>Corporate tenancies</b>	<p>Any tenancy where (to the councillor’s knowledge)—</p> <p>(a) the landlord is the council; and</p> <p>(b) the tenant is a body that the councillor, or his/her spouse or civil partner or the person with whom the councillor is living as if they were spouses/civil partners is a partner of or a director* of or has a beneficial interest in the securities* of.</p>
<b>Securities</b>	<p>Any beneficial interest in securities* of a body where—</p> <p>(a) that body (to the councillor’s knowledge) has a place of business or land in the area of the council; and</p> <p>(b) either—</p> <p>(i) the total nominal value of the securities* exceeds £25,000 or one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that body; or</p> <p>(ii) if the share capital of that body is of more than one class, the total nominal value of the shares of any one class in which the councillor, or his/her spouse or civil partner or the person with whom the councillor is living as if they were</p>

	spouses/civil partners has a beneficial interest exceeds one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that class.
--	---

\* 'director' includes a member of the committee of management of an industrial and provident society.

\* 'securities' means shares, debentures, debenture stock, loan stock, bonds, units of a collective investment scheme within the meaning of the Financial Services and Markets Act 2000 and other securities of any description, other than money deposited with a building society.

**Table 2: Other Registerable Interests**

You have a personal interest in any business of your authority where it relates to or is likely to affect:

- a) any body of which you are in general control or management and to which you are nominated or appointed by your authority
- b) any body
  - (i) exercising functions of a public nature
  - (ii) any body directed to charitable purposes or
  - (iii) one of whose principal purposes includes the influence of public opinion or policy (including any political party or trade union)

## Appendix C – the Committee on Standards in Public Life

The LGA has undertaken this review whilst the Government continues to consider the recommendations made by the Committee on Standards in Public Life in their report on [Local Government Ethical Standards](#). If the Government chooses to implement any of the recommendations, this could require a change to this Code.

The recommendations cover:

- Recommendations for changes to the Localism Act 2011 to clarify in law when the Code of Conduct applies
- The introduction of sanctions
- An appeals process through the Local Government Ombudsman
- Changes to the Relevant Authorities (Disclosable Pecuniary Interests) Regulations 2012
- Updates to the Local Government Transparency Code
- Changes to the role and responsibilities of the Independent Person
- That the criminal offences in the Localism Act 2011 relating to Disclosable Pecuniary Interests should be abolished

The Local Government Ethical Standards report also includes Best Practice recommendations. These are:

**Best practice 1:** Local authorities should include prohibitions on bullying and harassment in codes of conduct. These should include a definition of bullying and harassment, supplemented with a list of examples of the sort of behaviour covered by such a definition.

**Best practice 2:** Councils should include provisions in their code of conduct requiring councillors to comply with any formal standards investigation and prohibiting trivial or malicious allegations by councillors.

**Best practice 3:** Principal authorities should review their code of conduct each year and regularly seek, where possible, the views of the public, community organisations and neighbouring authorities.

**Best practice 4:** An authority's code should be readily accessible to both councillors and the public, in a prominent position on a council's website and available in council premises.

**Best practice 5:** Local authorities should update their gifts and hospitality register at least once per quarter, and publish it in an accessible format, such as CSV.

**Best practice 6:** Councils should publish a clear and straightforward public interest test against which allegations are filtered.

**Best practice 7:** Local authorities should have access to at least two Independent Persons.

**Best practice 8:** An Independent Person should be consulted as to whether to undertake a formal investigation on an allegation, and should be given the option to

review and comment on allegations which the responsible officer is minded to dismiss as being without merit, vexatious, or trivial.

**Best practice 9:** Where a local authority makes a decision on an allegation of misconduct following a formal investigation, a decision notice should be published as soon as possible on its website, including a brief statement of facts, the provisions of the code engaged by the allegations, the view of the Independent Person, the reasoning of the decision-maker, and any sanction applied.

**Best practice 10:** A local authority should have straightforward and accessible guidance on its website on how to make a complaint under the code of conduct, the process for handling complaints, and estimated timescales for investigations and outcomes.

**Best practice 11:** Formal standards complaints about the conduct of a parish councillor towards a clerk should be made by the chair or by the parish council, rather than the clerk in all but exceptional circumstances.

**Best practice 12:** Monitoring Officers' roles should include providing advice, support and management of investigations and adjudications on alleged breaches to parish councils within the remit of the principal authority. They should be provided with adequate training, corporate support and resources to undertake this work.

**Best practice 13:** A local authority should have procedures in place to address any conflicts of interest when undertaking a standards investigation. Possible steps should include asking the Monitoring Officer from a different authority to undertake the investigation.

**Best practice 14:** Councils should report on separate bodies they have set up or which they own as part of their annual governance statement and give a full picture of their relationship with those bodies. Separate bodies created by local authorities should abide by the Nolan principle of openness and publish their board agendas and minutes and annual reports in an accessible place.

**Best practice 15:** Senior officers should meet regularly with political group leaders or group whips to discuss standards issues.

***The LGA has committed to reviewing the Code on an annual basis to ensure it is still fit for purpose.***





## **SECTION A – HUMBERSIDE FIRE AUTHORITY MEMBERS' CODE OF CONDUCT**

Humberside Fire Authority is required to adopt a code dealing with the conduct that is expected of Members and co-opted Members of the authority when they are acting in that capacity. The Code must be consistent with the Seven Principles of Public Life (the 'Nolan' principles) and the National Fire Chief's Council Core Code of Ethics -

### **The Seven Principles of Public Life**

#### **Selflessness**

Holders of public office should act solely in terms of the public interest.

#### **Integrity**

Holders of public office must avoid placing themselves under any obligation to people or organisations that might try inappropriately to influence them in their work. They should not act or take decisions in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family, or their friends. They must disclose and resolve any interests and relationships.

#### **Objectivity**

Holders of public office must act and take decisions impartially, fairly and on merit, using the best evidence and without discrimination or bias.

#### **Accountability**

Holders of public office are accountable to the public for their decisions and actions and must submit themselves to the scrutiny necessary to ensure this.

#### **Openness**

Holders of public office should act and take decisions in an open and transparent manner. Information should not be withheld from the public unless there are clear and lawful reasons for so doing.

#### **Honesty**

Holders of public office should be truthful.

#### **Leadership**

Holders of public office should exhibit these principles in their own behaviour. They should actively promote and robustly support the principles and be willing to challenge poor behaviour wherever it occurs.

## National Fire Chief's Council Core Code of Ethics

- **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.

The principles and Core Code of Ethics do not form part of the Code itself. Complaints that a Member has breached the provisions of the Code must be based on a breach of the provisions set out below under Standards of Councillor Conduct.

## PART I - GENERAL PROVISIONS

### 1. Introduction and Interpretation

#### Definitions

In this Code of Conduct:-

**Councillor** means a member or co-opted member of the fire authority ; “co-opted member” is defined in the Localism Act 2011 Section 27(4) as “a person who is not a member of the authority but who

(a) is a member of any committee or sub-committee of the authority, or;

(b) is a member of, and represents the authority on, any joint committee or joint sub-committee of the authority;

and who is entitled to vote on any question that falls to be decided at any meeting of that committee or sub-committee”.

This includes members of the Governance Audit and Scrutiny committee.

**Relative** means Spouse, Civil partner, any person with whom you are living as a spouse or civil partner, parent, grandparent, child, grandchild or sibling.

#### Purpose of the Code of Conduct

You are a representative of the Fire Authority ( the Authority ) and the public will view you as such. Therefore your actions impact on how the Authority as a whole is viewed and your actions can have both a positive and negative impact on the Authority.

The public expect Councillors to act in an open and transparent manner, which reinforces public confidence in the Authority

#### Application of the Code of Conduct

This Code applies to you as a Councillor on the Fire Authority when you act in your role as a Councillor. It is your responsibility to comply with the provisions of this Code.

This Code of Conduct applies to you when you are acting in your capacity as a Councillor which may include when:

- you misuse your position as a Councillor
- Your actions would give the impression to a reasonable member of the public with knowledge of all the facts that you are acting as a Councillor;

and references to your official capacity are construed accordingly.

The Code applies to all forms of communication and interaction, including:

- at face-to-face meetings
- at online or telephone meetings
- in written communication

- in verbal communication
- in non-verbal communication
- in electronic and social media communication, posts, statements and comments.

Your Monitoring Officer has statutory responsibility for the implementation of the Code of Conduct, and you are encouraged to seek advice from your Monitoring Officer on any matters that may relate to the Code of Conduct.

Where you act as a representative of the Authority:

- on another relevant authority, you must when acting for that other authority, comply with that other authority's code of conduct; or
- on any other body, you must, when acting for that other body, comply with your Authority's code of conduct, except and insofar as it conflicts with any other lawful obligations to which that other body may be subject.

### **Standards of Councillor conduct**

This section sets out your obligations, which are the minimum standards of conduct required of you as a Councillor. Should your conduct fall short of these standards, a complaint may be made against you, which may result in action being taken.

Guidance is included to help explain the reasons for the obligations and how they should be followed.

#### **You must treat others with respect and courtesy.**

Respect means politeness and courtesy in behaviour, speech, and in the written word. Debate and having different views are all part of a healthy democracy. As a Councillor, you can express, challenge, criticise and disagree with views, ideas, opinions and policies in a robust but civil manner. You should not, however, subject individuals, groups of people or organisations to personal attack.

In your contact with the public, you should treat them politely and courteously. Rude and offensive behaviour lowers the public's expectations and confidence in Councillors.

In return, you have a right to expect respectful behaviour from the public. If members of the public are being abusive, intimidatory or threatening you are entitled to stop any conversation or interaction in person or online. Intimidatory or threatening behaviour which may amount to a criminal offence can be reported to the Police. You may also report any such behaviour to the relevant social media provider. This also applies to fellow Councillors, where action could then be taken under the Code of Conduct, and authority employees, where concerns should be raised in line with the protocol for member and officer relationships.

- 1. You must not bully or harass any person.**
- 2. You must not do anything which may cause the Authority to breach any equality laws.**

The Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service (ACAS) characterises bullying as offensive, intimidating, malicious or insulting behaviour, an abuse or misuse of power through means that

undermine, humiliate, denigrate or injure the recipient. Bullying might be a regular pattern of behaviour or a one-off incident, happen face-to-face, on social media, in emails or phone calls, happen in the workplace or at work social events and may not always be obvious or noticed by others.

The Protection from Harassment Act 1997 defines harassment as conduct that causes alarm or distress or puts people in fear of violence and must involve such conduct on at least two occasions. It can include repeated attempts to impose unwanted communications and contact upon a person in a manner that could be expected to cause distress or fear in any reasonable person.

Unlawful discrimination is where someone is treated unfairly because of a protected characteristic. Protected characteristics are specific aspects of a person's identity defined by the Equality Act 2010. They are age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

The Equality Act 2010 places specific duties on local authorities. Councillors have a central role to play in ensuring that equality issues are integral to the local authority's performance and strategic aims, and that there is a strong vision and public commitment to equality across public services

**3. You must not conduct yourself in a manner that could reasonably be regarded as bringing your office or Authority into disrepute.**

As a Councillor, you are trusted to make decisions on behalf of your community and your actions and behaviour are subject to greater scrutiny than that of ordinary members of the public. You should be aware that your actions might have an adverse impact on you, other Councillors and/or the Authority and may lower the public's confidence in your or the Authority's ability to discharge your/its functions. For example, behaviour that is considered dishonest and/or deceitful can bring the fire authority into disrepute.

You are able to hold the fire and rescue service and fellow Councillors to account and are able to constructively challenge and express concern about decisions and processes undertaken by the Authority whilst continuing to adhere to other aspects of the Code of Conduct.

**4. You must not**

**a. Disclose information:**

- i. given to you in confidence by anyone
- ii. acquired by you which you believe, or ought reasonably to be aware, is of a confidential nature,
- iii. which consists of the personal data of another person , unless
  - 1. You have received the consent of a person authorised to give it;
  - 2. You are required by law to do so;
  - 3. the disclosure is made to a third party for the purpose of obtaining professional legal advice provided that the third party agrees not to disclose the information to any other person; or
  - 4. the disclosure is:

- a. **reasonable and in the public interest; and**
- b. **made in good faith and in compliance with the reasonable requirements of the local authority; and**
- c. **You have consulted the Monitoring Officer prior to its release.**

- b. **Improperly use knowledge gained solely as a result of your role as a Councillor for the advancement of you, your close associates, members of your family, your employer or your business interests.**

**Prevent anyone from getting information that they entitled to by law.**

The Authority must work openly and transparently, and their proceedings and printed materials are open to the public, except in certain legally defined circumstances. You should work on this basis, but there will be times when it is required by law that discussions, documents and other information relating to or held by the Authority must be treated in a confidential manner. Examples include personal data relating to individuals or information relating to ongoing negotiations.

- 5. You must act solely in the public interest and not use, or attempt to use, your position as a Councillor improperly to confer or secure for yourself or any other person an advantage or disadvantage.**

Your position as a Councillor provides you with certain opportunities, responsibilities and privileges, and you make choices all the time that will impact others. However, you should not take advantage of these opportunities to further your own or others' private interests or to disadvantage anyone unfairly

- 6. You must not do anything which compromises, or is likely to compromise, the impartiality of those who work for, or on behalf of, Humberside Fire and Rescue Service.**

Officers work for the Fire and Rescue service as a whole and must be politically neutral. They should not be coerced or persuaded to act in a way that would undermine their neutrality. You can question officers in order to understand, for example, their reasons for proposing to act in a particular way, or the content of a report that they have written. However, you must not try and force them to act differently, change their advice, or alter the content of that report, if doing so would prejudice their professional integrity.

- 7. You must not misuse the resources of the Authority**
- 8. When using the resources of the Authority or authorising their use by others you must:**
  - a. **act in accordance with the Authority's requirements**

- b. ensure that such resources are not used improperly for political purposes (including party political purposes)**

You may be provided with resources and facilities by the Authority to assist you in carrying out your duties as a Councillor.

Examples include:

- office support
- stationery
- equipment such as phones, and computers
- transport
- access and use of Authority buildings and rooms.

These are given to you to help you carry out your role as a Councillor more effectively and are not to be used for business or personal gain. They should be used in accordance with the purpose for which they have been provided and the Authority's own policies regarding their use.

**9. You must –**

- a. undertake Code of Conduct training provided by your Authority.**
- b. co-operate with any Code of Conduct investigation and/or determination.**
- c. comply with any sanction imposed on you following a finding that you have breached the Code of Conduct.**

**10. You must not –**

- a. intimidate or attempt to intimidate any person who is likely to be involved with the administration of any investigation or proceedings.**
- b. make any trivial or malicious complaint against any other Member alleging a breach of any of the provisions of this Code of Conduct.**

It is extremely important for you as a Councillor to demonstrate high standards, for you to have your actions open to scrutiny and for you not to undermine public trust in the Authority or its governance. If you do not understand or are concerned about the Authority's processes in handling a complaint you should raise this with your Monitoring Officer.

- 11. You must within 28 days of receipt, register offers of gifts or hospitality with a value of £25 or more which have been offered to you in your capacity as a Councillor from any person or body other than the authority.**

- 12. You must not accept gifts and hospitality regardless of value where it may lead any reasonable person with knowledge of the relevant facts to believe that you might be influenced by the gift or hospitality given.**

In order to protect your position and the reputation of the Authority, you should exercise caution in accepting any gifts or hospitality which are (or which you reasonably believe to be) offered to you because you are a Councillor. The presumption should always be not to accept significant gifts or hospitality. However, there may be times when such a refusal may be difficult if it is seen as rudeness in which case you could accept it but must ensure it is publicly registered. However, you do not need to register gifts and hospitality which are not related to your role as a Councillor, such as Christmas gifts from your friends and family. It is also important to note that it is appropriate to accept normal expenses and hospitality associated with your duties as a Councillor. If you are unsure, do contact your Monitoring Officer for guidance.

- 13. You must before the end of 28 days beginning on the day on which you become a Councillor or within 28 days of any change in an interest or becoming aware of any new interest notify the Monitoring Officer of:**

- a. **The following Pecuniary Interests of yourself, your spouse or civil partner, any person with whom you are living as husband or wife or any person with whom you are living as if they were a civil partner:**
  - i. **Any employment, office, trade, profession or vocation carried on for profit or gain.**
  - ii. **Any payment or provision of any other financial benefit (other than from the council) made to the councillor during the previous 12-month period for expenses incurred by him/her in carrying out his/her duties as a councillor, or towards his/her election expenses. This includes any payment or financial benefit from a trade union within the meaning of the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992.**
  - iii. **Any contract made between the councillor or his/her spouse or civil partner or the person with whom the councillor is living as if they were spouses/civil partners (or a firm in which such person is a partner, or an incorporated body of which such person is a director\* or a body that such person has a beneficial interest in the securities of\*) and the council — (a) under which goods or services are to be provided or works are to be executed; and (b) which has not been fully discharged.**
  - iv. **Any beneficial interest in land which is within the area of the council. ‘Land’ excludes an easement, servitude, interest or right in or over land which does not give the councillor or his/her spouse or civil partner or the person with whom the councillor is living as if they were spouses/ civil partners (alone or jointly with another) a right to occupy or to receive income.**
  - v. **Any licence (alone or jointly with others) to occupy land in the area of the council for a month or longer**
  - vi. **Any tenancy where (to the councillor’s knowledge) — (a) the landlord is the council; and (b) the tenant is a body that the councillor, or his/her spouse or civil partner or the person with whom the councillor is living as if they were spouses/ civil partners**



is a partner of or a director\* of or has a beneficial interest in the securities\*\*of.

- vii. Any beneficial interest in securities\*\* of a body where — (a) that body (to the councillor's knowledge) has a place of business or land in the area of the council; and (b) either — (i) ) the total nominal value of the securities\*\* exceeds £25,000 or one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that body; or (ii) if the share capital of that body is of more than one class, the total nominal value of the shares of any one class in which the councillor, or his/ her spouse or civil partner or the person with whom the councillor is living as if they were spouses/civil partners has a beneficial interest exceeds one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that class.

\* 'director' includes a member of the committee of management of an industrial and provident society.

\*\* 'securities' means shares, debentures, debenture stock, loan stock, bonds, units of a collective investment scheme within the meaning of the Financial Services and Markets Act 2000 and other securities of any description, other than money deposited with a building society.

**b. The following Non-Pecuniary interests of yourself:**

- i. Any body of which you are a member or in a position of general control or management and to which you are appointed or nominated by the authority
- ii. Any voluntary work undertaken by you
- iii. Any bodies –
  - a. exercising functions of a public nature
  - b. directed to charitable purposes or
  - c. whose principal purposes include influence of public opinion of policy (including any political party or trade union)

of which you are a member or in a position of general control or management

**14. You need only notify the Monitoring Officer of any interests of which you are aware pursuant to paragraph 13 above.**

**15. Where the nature of the interest is such that you consider that the disclosure of the interest could lead to you or a person connected with you being subject to violence or intimidation, (and the Monitoring Officer agrees) details of the interests will not be included in any published version of the register of interests save that the register will state you have an interest the details of which are withheld under section 32(2) of the Localism Act 2011.**

Section 29 of the Localism Act 2011 requires the Monitoring Officer to establish and maintain a register of interests of members of the Authority. You need to register your interests so that the public, employees of the Fire and Rescue Service and fellow Councillors know which of your interests might give rise to a conflict of interest. The

register is a public document that can be consulted when (or before) an issue arises. The register also protects you by allowing you to demonstrate openness and a willingness to be held accountable. You are personally responsible for deciding whether or not you should disclose an interest in a meeting, but it can be helpful for you to know early on if others think that a potential conflict might arise. It is also important that the public know about any interest that might have to be disclosed by you or other councillors when making or taking part in decisions, so that decision making is seen by the public as open and honest. This helps to ensure that public confidence in the integrity of local governance is maintained.

You should note that failure to register or disclose a pecuniary interest as set out at paragraph 13 above is a criminal offence under the Localism Act 2011.

### **Actions on Interests**

- 16. Where a matter arises at a meeting which directly relates to one of your Pecuniary Interests as set out at paragraph 13 above, you must disclose the interest, not participate in any discussion or vote on the matter and must leave the room unless you have been granted a dispensation. If it is a 'sensitive interest', you do not have to disclose the nature of the interest, just that you have an interest. Dispensation may be granted in limited circumstances, to enable you to participate and vote on a matter in which you have a pecuniary interest.**
- 17. You have a non-pecuniary interest in any business of the authority where either-**
  - a. it is likely to affect any of the bodies listed in paragraph 13 (b) above;**
  - b. it is likely to affect any person or body from whom you have within the last six years and in your capacity as a Member accepted an offer of gifts or hospitality with a value of £25.00 or more, or**
  - c. the decision in relation to that business might reasonably be regarded as affecting your wellbeing, or financial position, or the wellbeing or financial position of a relevant person to a greater extent than the majority of other Council tax payers, rate payers or inhabitants of the Ward affected by the decision.**
- 18. A relevant person is:-**
  - a. A relative or any person with whom you have a close association, or**
  - b. A person or body who employs or has appointed such persons any firm of which they are a partner or any company of which they are Directors.**
- 19. Where you have a non-pecuniary interest in any business of the Authority and you attend a meeting of the Authority at which that business is considered you must disclose to that meeting the existence and nature of that interest at the commencement of that consideration or when the interest becomes apparent.**

20. Paragraph 19 only applies where you are aware or ought reasonably to be aware of the existence of the interest.
21. Where you have an interest but by virtue of paragraph 15 it is not registered in the Authority's register of interests you must indicate you have a non-pecuniary interest but need not disclose the sensitive information to the meeting.
22. Subject to sub-paragraph (a) below where you have a non-pecuniary interest in any business of the Authority you also have a prejudicial interest in that business where the interest is one which a member of the public with knowledge of the relevant facts would reasonably regard as so significant that it is likely to prejudice your judgement of the public interest
  - a. You do not have a prejudicial interest in any business of the authority where that business relates to the functions of your Authority in respect of –
    - i. an allowance, payment or indemnity given to members;
    - ii. setting the precept under the Local Government Finance Act 1992
23. Where a matter arises at a meeting in which you have a prejudicial interest, you must disclose the interest, not participate in any discussion or vote on the matter and must leave the room. Where you have an interest but by virtue of paragraph 15 it is not registered in the Authority's register of interests you must indicate you have a prejudicial interest but need not disclose the sensitive information to the meeting.



## Humberside Fire & Rescue Service

### Internal Audit Annual Report

2021/22

April 2022

# Internal Audit Annual Report

## Introduction

This is the 2021/22 Annual Report by TIAA on the internal control environment at Humberside Fire & Rescue Service. The annual internal audit report summarises the outcomes of the reviews we have carried out on the organisation's framework of governance, risk management and control. This report, which incorporates CIPFA guidance on the potential limitation of scope brought about by the impact of COVID-19, is designed to assist Humberside Fire Authority in making its annual governance statement.

## Limitations on our opinion arising from Covid-19

The impact of COVID-19 on many organisations has continued to be felt throughout 2021/22 with restrictions continuing to be applied. This has been compounded by the emergence of new variants which has required the vaccination and booster programme to be accelerated. These have impacted staff availability and organisational capacity. It is acknowledged that this has affected some sectors more than others.

For internal audit the question remains as to whether sufficient internal audit work has been undertaken to gain assurance during 2021/22. This is a key consideration to fulfil the requirement of the Public Sector Internal Audit Standards (PSIAS) for the Head of Internal Audit (HIA) when issuing their annual opinion on the overall adequacy and effectiveness of the organisation's framework of governance, risk management and control. This opinion is in turn one of the sources of assurance that the organisation relies on for its Annual Governance Statement. Factors that need to be taken in to account in reaching a conclusion include:

- Has any reduction in coverage compared to what was planned resulted in insufficient assurance work?
- Have any limitations in the scope of individual assignments resulted in it only being possible to place partial assurance on the outcome?
- Have changes in ways of working led to gaps in the governance, risk management and control arrangements?

TIAA understands the considerable challenges and the difficult decisions that organisations are having to deal with, however, the professional and regulatory expectations on public bodies to ensure that their internal audit arrangements conform with PSIAS have not changed. In this difficult situation, heads of internal audit will need

to consider whether they can still issue the annual opinion or whether there will need to be a limitation of scope.

A limitation of scope arises where the HIA is unable to draw on sufficient assurance to issue a complete annual opinion in accordance with the professional standards. This is an issue not only for the HIA but also for the leadership team and the audit committee who normally rely on that opinion. It may also have wider consequences for stakeholder assessments of the organisation.

## What this means for Humberside Fire & Rescue Service

There has been minimal or no impact on the delivery of the internal audit work for 2021/22 as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. Whilst there was an impact on delivery of the work in the early part of the year during the initial lockdown, we are able to deliver the planned work by year-end (or shortly thereafter). There have been no changes to the planned work as a result of COVID-19; any changes to the plan were based on purely on business/operational need.

### HEAD OF INTERNAL AUDIT'S ANNUAL OPINION

**TIAA is satisfied that, for the areas reviewed during the year, Humberside Fire & Rescue has reasonable and effective risk management, control and governance processes in place.**

**This opinion is based solely on the matters that came to the attention of TIAA during the course of the internal audit reviews carried out during the year and is not an opinion on all elements of the risk management, control and governance processes or the ongoing financial viability or your ability to meet financial obligations which must be obtained by the Service from its various sources of assurance.**

## Internal Audit Planned Coverage and Output

The 2021/22 Annual Audit Plan approved by the Governance, Audit and Scrutiny Committee was for 85 days of internal audit coverage in the year.

During the year there was one change to the Audit Plan and this change was approved by the Governance, Audit and Scrutiny Committee. This involved utilising three days of the contingency for a follow up to the Productivity Shift System review.

The planned work that has been carried out against the plan and the status of work not completed is set out at Annex A.

## Assurance

TIAA carried out nine reviews, which were designed to ascertain the extent to which the internal controls in the system are adequate to ensure that activities and procedures are operating to achieve the Service's objectives. For each assurance review an assessment of the combined effectiveness of the controls in mitigating the key control risks was provided. Details of these are provided in Annex A and a summary is set out below.

Assurance Assessments	Number of Reviews	Previous Year
Substantial Assurance	2	3
Reasonable Assurance	6	7
Limited Assurance	1	0
No Assurance	0	0

The areas on which the assurance assessments have been provided can only provide reasonable and not absolute assurance against misstatement or loss and their effectiveness is reduced if the internal audit recommendations made during the year have not been fully implemented.

We made the following total number of recommendations on our audit work carried out in 2021/22. The numbers in brackets relate to 2020/21 recommendations

Urgent	Important	Routine
1 (0)	14 (14)	15 (16)

## Audit Summary

**Control weaknesses:** There was one area reviewed by internal audit where it was assessed that the effectiveness of some of the internal control arrangements provided 'limited' or 'no assurance'. Recommendations were made to further strengthen the control environment in these areas and the management responses indicated that the recommendations had been accepted.

**Recommendations Made:** We have analysed our findings/recommendations by risk area and these are summarised below.

Risk Area	Urgent	Important	Routine
Directed			
Governance Framework	1	3	8
Risk Mitigation	0	0	0
Compliance	0	8	6
Delivery			
Performance Monitoring	0	2	0
Financial Constraint	0	0	0
Resilience	0	1	1

**Operational Effectiveness Opportunities:** One of the roles of internal audit is to add value and during the financial year we provided advice on opportunities to enhance the operational effectiveness of the areas reviewed and the number of these opportunities is summarised below.

Operational
0 (1)

## Independence and Objectivity of Internal Audit

There were no limitations or restrictions placed on the internal audit service which impaired either the independence or objectivity of the service provided.

## Performance and Quality Assurance

The following Performance Targets were used to measure the performance of internal audit in delivering the Annual Plan.

Performance Measure	Target	Attained
Completion of Planned Audits	100%	100%
Audits Completed in Time Allocation	100%	100%
Final report issued within 10 working days of receipt of responses	95%	100%
Compliance with Public Sector Internal Audit Standards	100%	100%

Ongoing quality assurance work was carried out throughout the year and we continue to comply with ISO 9001:2015 standards. An independent external review was carried out of our compliance of the Public Sector Internal Audit Standards (PSIAS) in 2017 and in particular to meet the requirement of an independent 5 year review, the outcome confirmed full compliance with all the standards. Our work also complies with the IIA-UK Professional Standards and relevant guidance issued by the Accounts & Audit Regulations 2015.

## Release of Report

The table below sets out the history of this Annual Report.

Date Report issued:	1 <sup>st</sup> April 2022
---------------------	----------------------------



## Annexes

### Annex A

#### Actual against planned Internal Audit Work 2021/22

System	Type	Planned Days	Actual Days	Assurance Assessment	Comments
National Operational Guidance Phase 3 and 4	Assurance	6	6	Reasonable	Final report issued
Productivity – Shift System	Assurance	6	6	Limited	Final report issued
Equality, Diversity and Inclusion	Assurance	4	4	Reasonable	Final report issued
Enforcement	Assurance	4	4	Reasonable	Final report issued
Out of Hours Arrangements	Assurance	6	6	Substantial	Final report issued
Data Quality – Risk Information	Assurance	6	6	Reasonable	Final report issued
Grievance Arrangements	Assurance	4	4	Reasonable	Final report issued
Key Financial Controls	Assurance	8	8	Reasonable	Draft report issued
Contingency	Assurance	10	0		
Shift Productivity Follow Up	Assurance	0	3	Reasonable	Final report issued
Follow-up		3	3	N/A	Draft report issued
Annual Planning		2	2	N/A	Annual Plan issued
Annual Report		1	1	N/A	Annual Report issued
Audit Management		5	5	N/A	N/A
Total Days		65	58		





149	1,758	31	2,313	118	2,028	220
183	1,595	92				
(32.4%)	(69.8%)	(48.9%)				
2026						

# Management Accounts for the period ending 28 February 2022



**HUMBERSIDE**  
Fire & Rescue Service

**Index**

Key to Traffic Light System	2
Revenue Budget Summary	3
Capital Budget	5
Pensions Account	6
Treasury Management - Borrowing & Lending Activity	7
Movement in Revenue Reserves	8
Budget Virements Processed	9

**Key To Traffic Light System**

The elements of the Traffic Light system being used in the report to highlight significant outturn variances / issues are as follows:-

**Status Column** - indicates, using a colour reference whether an issue is:-

**Red**            **Potentially detrimental** to the finances of the Authority

**Green**        **In line with budget or potentially advantageous** to the finances of the Authority.

## **HUMBERSIDE FIRE & RESCUE SERVICE** **COMMENTARY ON THE MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTS** **For the period 1 April 2021 to 28 February 2022**

The following statements represent a summary of the financial activity of the Service for the period stated above.

Each statement is accompanied with notes, referenced to specific lines on that statement where significant variances have been forecasted or where further explanation of information shown is necessary.

### **Revenue Statements**

These statements show the actual and committed revenue expenditure, in summary subjective heading format (Table 1) as at 28 February 2022 compared to the profiled 2021/22 budget for the same period. The report also shows the forecasted outturn for the full year based on current levels of income and expenditure and any known variations to the end of the financial year.

Table 1

#### HUMBERSIDE FIRE & RESCUE SERVICE REVENUE MONITORING SUMMARY STATEMENT 2021/22 1 April 2021 to 28 February 2022 (Period 11)

	Original Budget	Revised Budget	28 February 2022		Projection	Full Year		Status	Note
			Profile	Actual & Committed		Variance			
£'000			£'000	£'000		£'000	£'000		
Employees									
Wholtime Firefighters	24,709	24,839 *	22,730	22,739	24,933	94	0.38	Red	1
On-Call Firefighters	4,828	4,878 *	4,297	4,094	4,652	(226)	(4.63)	Green	1
Non-Operational	6,986	6,986	6,406	6,288	6,986	-	-	Green	
Other Employee Expenses (Training, Occ Health, Insurance)	1,632	1,632	1,389	1,548	1,559	(73)	(4.47)	Green	2
Total Pay & Pensions	38,155	38,335	34,822	34,669	38,130	(205)	(0.53)		
Premises	2,744	2,676	2,590	2,527	2,544	(132)	(4.93)	Green	3
Transport	1,793	1,729	1,644	1,636	1,706	(23)	(1.33)	Green	4
Supplies & Services	3,743	3,911 *	3,693	3,332	3,696	(215)	(5.50)	Green	5
Support Services	204	204	188	86	204	-	-	Green	
Non Pay Efficiency Savings	(127)	-	-	-	-	-	-	Green	
Total Expenditure	46,512	46,855	42,937	42,250	46,280	(575)	(1.23)		
Income	(4,236)	(4,236)	(3,883)	(4,660)	(4,871)	(635)	14.99	Green	6
Net Expenditure (Ex Capital Charges)	42,276	42,619	39,054	37,590	41,409	(1,210)	(2.84)		
Interest Payable	661	661	529	335	661	-	-	Green	
Interest Receivable	(40)	(40)	(37)	(9)	(14)	26	(65.00)	Red	7
Accounting Adjustments	2,192	2,292	-	-	2,488	196	8.55	Red	8
Contributions to / (from) Reserves	74	810 *	-	-	810	-	-	Green	
Net Budget Requirement	45,163	46,342	39,546	37,916	45,354	(988)	(2.13)	Green	
Financed By									
Business Rates	(3,955)	(5,134)	(3,745)	(3,745)	(5,134)	-	-		
National Non Domestic Rates	(17,144)	(17,144)	(15,915)	(15,915)	(17,144)	-	-		
Precepts	(24,064)	(24,064)	(22,385)	(22,385)	(24,064)	-	-		
	-	-	(2,499)	(4,129)	(988)	(988)	-		

\*budgets increased to reflect additional spend and grant received from Government in relation to COVID19 and other transfer from earmarked reserves

**Notes**

1. This projected overspend is primarily due to the Firefighters' pay award and additional costs associated with the immediate detriment (interest, compensation for employee contributions, contribution holidays, annual allowance charges and unauthorised payment charges) which may be recovered from Government. In addition to this there has been an underspend on employer's pension contributions as well as lower call out costs for on-call staff.
2. Lower injury allowance and ill health pension contributions are primarily the reason for this variance.
3. This projected underspend is primarily due to lower Business Rates charges following a review of the rateable values of our premises which was initiated by the Corporate Finance and Procurement team.
4. This projected underspend is primarily due to spending less on fuel and officer travel.
5. This projected underspend is primarily due to lower ICT costs in relation to the WAN due to investment in previous years. In addition to this the smoke alarms and hydrant maintenance budgets not being fully utilised due to sufficient stock levels of smoke alarms and less hydrant maintenance required.
6. This variance is due to additional grant received from Government in relation to Protection and compensation for loss of income as well as additional income in relation to aerial rentals and secondments of staff.
7. This variance is due to lower interest rates than anticipated.
8. This variance is primarily due to funding capital expenditure to maintain downward pressure on the Authority's Capital Financing Requirement.

## Capital Statement

This report shows the actual and committed capital expenditure as at 31 December 2021 compared with the adjusted profiled 2021/22 budget for the same period. This report also shows the forecasted outturn for the full year based on current levels of expenditure and any known variations to the end of the financial year.

Table 2

HUMBERSIDE FIRE & RESCUE SERVICE  
CAPITAL MONITORING STATEMENT 2021/22  
1 April 2021 to 28 February 2022 (Period 11)

	Original Budget	Revised Budget	28 February 2022		Full Year			Traffic Light	Notes
			Profile	Actual & Committed	Projection	Variance		Status	
			£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	%		
<b>SCHEME</b>									
<b>Building Works</b>									
Invest to Save	-	207	52	-	207	-	-	Green	
Goole	-	387	97	-	30	(357)	(92.25)	Green	1
Snaith	25	40	10	-	-	(40)	(100.00)	Green	1
Bridlington	-	102	26	-	29	(73)	(71.57)	Green	1
BA Training Refurbishment	-	18	5	-	-	(18)	(100.00)	Green	1
Dignity Works	-	13	3	-	13	-	-	Green	
Co-Location	-	97	24	-	-	(97)	(100.00)	Green	1
Howden	-	390	98	-	-	(390)	(100.00)	Green	1
Winterton	150	150	38	-	-	(150)	(100.00)	Green	1
Pocklington	100	100	25	-	-	(100)	(100.00)	Green	1
Scunthorpe	-	104	26	-	25	(79)	(75.96)	Green	1
Immingham East	350	350	88	-	-	(350)	(100.00)	Green	1
Grimsby - Cromwell Road	250	250	63	-	-	(250)	(100.00)	Green	1
Headquarters	10	67	17	-	67	-	-	Green	
Furniture and Equipment	-	8	2	3	8	-	-	Green	
	885	2,283	574	3	379	(1,904)	(83.40)		
<b>Vehicles</b>									
Operational Vehicles	1,460	1,633	1,633	197	197	(1,436)	(87.94)	Green	2
Support Vehicles	222	655	655	46	76	(579)	(88.40)	Green	2
<b>Equipment</b>	285	557	557	107	111	(446)	(80.07)	Green	2
<b>PPE</b>	-	1,400	1,400	1,035	1,035	(365)	(26.07)	Green	3
<b>Information Technology</b>	500	601	500	282	400	(201)	(33.44)	Green	4
	3,352	7,129	5,319	1,670	2,198	(4,931)	(69.17)		

## Notes

1. These capital schemes are expected to be completed during 2022/23.
2. The Fire Appliances and support vehicles are not expected to be delivered until 2022/23.
3. Replacement Helmets are not expected to be delivered until 2022/23
4. A number of ICT projects are not expected to be completed until 2022/23.



## **Pensions Account Statement**

The Authority has a revised budgeted deficit of £12.9m on this account for 2021/22.

The deficit on this account is financed through the Pensions Top-up Grant given by the Home Office, of which 80% of the grant was received in July of this financial year. The Authority has to stand any cash flow losses until the balance of the grant is paid in full in July 2022.

Table 3

**HUMBERSIDE FIRE & RESCUE SERVICE  
PENSIONS ACCOUNT STATEMENT 2021/22  
1 April 2021 to 28 February 2022 (Period 11)**

	Revised Budget £'000	28 February 2022		Projection £'000	Full Year Variance		Note
		Profile £'000	Actual £'000		£'000	%	
<b><u>Expenditure</u></b>							
Pension payments	16,948	16,948	16,962	16,962	14	0.08	
Commutations	3,868	2,901	3,253	3,868	-	-	
Transfer Values	100	75	-	-	(100)	(100.00)	1
<b>Total Pensions Expenditure</b>	20,916	19,924	20,215	20,830	(86)	(0.41)	
<b><u>Income</u></b>							
Contributions							
Ill Health	(186)	(139)	(64)	(186)	-	-	
Employee's	(2,354)	(2,158)	(2,239)	(2,354)	-	-	
Employer's	(5,336)	(4,892)	(4,862)	(5,336)	-	-	
	(7,876)	(7,189)	(7,165)	(7,876)	-	-	
Transfer Values	(100)	(75)	-	-	100	(100.00)	1
<b>Total Pensions Income</b>	(7,976)	(7,264)	(7,165)	(7,876)	100	(1.25)	
Net Pensions Deficit/(Surplus) To be financed by HO grant	12,940	12,660	13,050	12,954	14	0.11	

## **Notes**

1. There haven't been any transfers into the Firefighters' Pension Scheme (FFPS) from other pension schemes nor has there been any transfers from the FFPS into other pension schemes during the year.

## Treasury Management

### Borrowing & Lending Activity

This statement shows the borrowing and lending activities undertaken by the Corporate Finance section of Hull City Council, on behalf of the Service, for the period 1 April 2021 to 28 February 2022 under the terms of the SLA. It also shows any variation between the actual interest received from the temporary investment of surplus monies and the budgeted interest.

Table 4

**HUMBERSIDE FIRE & RESCUE SERVICE  
BORROWING AND LENDING ACTIVITY STATEMENT  
For the Period Ending 28 February 2022**

Ref.	Company	Investment £	From	To	%	Returned	
						Interest £	Investment £
MMF	Deutsche Managed Sterling Fund	1,000,000.00					
MMF	Aberdeen (SL) Liquidity Fund	1,000,000.00					
MMF	Goldman Sachs Liquid Reserve Fund	1,000,000.00					
301727	Thurrock Council (rolled from 301722 to 301742)	2,000,000.00	25/06/2021	07/01/2022	0.09	966.58	2,000,000.00
301728	Nationwide BS (rolled from 301723)	2,000,000.00	25/06/2021	07/01/2022	0.07	751.78	2,000,000.00
301739	DMO	2,000,000.00	22/11/2021	28/01/2022	0.03	110.14	2,000,000.00
301743	DMO	1,000,000.00	28/01/2022	11/02/2022	0.14	53.70	1,000,000.00
301740	Skipton BS (rolled from 301733)	2,000,000.00	23/11/2021	23/02/2022	0.03	151.23	2,000,000.00
301747	DMO	2,000,000.00	23/02/2022	28/02/2022	0.30	82.19	2,000,000.00
301736	Leeds BS (rolled from 301735)	2,000,000.00	29/11/2021	09/03/2022	0.06	328.77	-
301742	Thurrock Council (rolled from 301727)	2,000,000.00	07/01/2022	07/04/2022	0.14	690.41	-
301745	Nationwide BS	2,000,000.00	21/02/2022	23/05/2022	0.52	2,592.88	-
301746	DMO	1,000,000.00	21/02/2022	23/05/2022	0.54	1,346.30	-
301744	Coventry BS	2,000,000.00	08/02/2022	08/08/2022	0.66	6,545.75	-
						<b>13,619.73</b>	

Total Investments at 28 February 2022

**12,000,000.00**

#### Summary of Interest Receipts

		Projection	Actual	Variance under/(over)	%
		£	£	£	
Accumulated interest on Investments to :	28/02/2022	36,663	9,050	27,613	75.32

#### Temporary Loans

Investment £	From	To	%	Interest £
-				-

The total amount temporarily invested at 28 February 2022 is £12.00m.

**Movement in Revenue Reserves**

This statement shows the movements on the revenue reserves for the period 1 April 2021 to 28 February 2022.

This statement also gives a projected value of revenue reserves at 31 March 2022 based on the projections in Table 1.

**Table 5**

**HUMBERSIDE FIRE & RESCUE SERVICE  
MOVEMENT IN REVENUE RESERVES  
as at 28 February 2022**

	As at 1 April 2021 £'000	In Year Movements £'000	Projected Balance at 31 March 2022 £'000
General Reserve	6,373	1,062 *	7,435
Earmarked Reserves			
Insurance	500	-	500
The Ark - National Flood Resilience Centre	1,000	-	1,000
Capital Programme	4,160	1,179	5,339
Resilience Reserve	300	-	300
ESMCP	355	-	355
Grenfell and Protection	155	(155)	-
East Coast & Hertfordshire Control Room Consortium	470	-	470
Uniform Replacement Programme	150	-	150
COVID	288	(288)	-
Environmental Reserve	30	(30)	-
	13,781	1,768	15,549

\*In year contribution to the General Reserve is based on the budgeted contribution to the reserve plus any estimated under/overspend as at 28 February 2022.

**Budget Virements (transfer between lines) Processed**

There were no budget virements processed during the period to 28 February 2022.

Governance, Audit and Scrutiny Committee 11 April 2022	Report by the Executive Director of People and Development
<p style="text-align: center;">REPORT EXECUTIVE SUMMARY</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Anti-Bullying Campaign (Progress Update)</b></p> <p>This paper responds to the following questions/requests as part of the GAS Committee Scrutiny Programme.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. How has the Service's anti-bullying campaign progressed?</li> <li>2. How does the Service know progress has been made?</li> <li>3. What have the Service's measures of organisational culture and bullying shown?</li> <li>4. How has the Service responded to the recommendations made by the Committee at its meeting of 5 July 2021 (Minute 70/21 refers).</li> </ol> <p>The recommendations of the committee in July 2021 were as follows:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) That the Service use its exit interviews and appraisals process to develop a clearer understanding of bullying and changes to its organisational culture;</li> <li>(b) That initial feedback on the progress of recommendation (a) be reported during the follow-up anti-bullying campaign item due to be heard on 11 April 2022;</li> <li>(c) That the Service obtain high-quality data through a survey of staff in order to develop a clearer understanding of bullying and organisational culture than that afforded by the HMICFRS surveys of 2018 and 2020, and</li> <li>(d) That the report for the follow-up anti-bullying campaign item contain feedback from the relevant unions.</li> </ol>	

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

1. The GAS committee take assurance from the progress that the Service is making in relation to Bullying and Harassment, and that due to the steady decline of staff reporting feeling bullied or harassed and with the organisation support in place, that this is embedded into business as usual for HR/OD to continue to monitor and report alongside other normal employee relations performance reports.

## **REPORT DETAIL**

### **How has the Service's anti-bullying campaign progressed?**

2. As reported in our June 2021 report, our Dignity at Work policy was fully consulted on with the Trade Unions, wider HFRS consultation and implemented in October 2019. At the same time, we developed and launched HFRS 'Zero Tolerance to Bullying Campaign' which included: -
  - a) Displaying of awareness posters in every Service building
  - b) Video message from the CFO encouraging bullying to be reported and specifying that it would be dealt with seriously
  - c) Supply of confidential contact numbers on posters
  - d) Screensavers that run automatically on every Service PC
  - e) An eLearning training and assessment package on Learn Pro that every member of staff was required to complete.
  - f) Credit card sized contact details distributed throughout all Service premises
3. Following on from the initial campaign, Occupational Health have implemented an Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) which provides confidential advice, guidance and support to staff whom may wish to seek independent support outside of the workplace.
4. The e-learning training and assessment package has continued to be an annual requirement for all staff and acts as a refresher/reminder for staff, the content of which includes the Service policy definition of bullying and harassment, as well as guidance on banter in the workplace. A section within the module identifies differences between legitimate performance management and bullying, including examples of behaviours associated with both.

### **How does the Service know progress has been made?**

5. The Service is able to assess progress by evaluating our employee relations and employee engagement data in relation to grievances, disciplinaries, exit interviews and staff surveys. This data during the period June 2021 to March 2022 is as follows:
6. There has been one grievance raised which alleged bullying. This was partially upheld in that the individual wasn't found to have been bullied but the manager had not dealt with their performance in an appropriate manner.
7. Throughout the same period, there were no disciplinary cases relating to bullying.
8. Throughout the same period there were no exit interviews reporting bullying.
9. As detailed in the June 2021 report, staff surveys have demonstrated a significant reduction in the number of staff reporting feeling bullied or harassed:

Survey	Staff who feel they have been bullied or harassed
2018/19 HMIC Inspection Survey	Yes 26%
2020 HMIC Covid Survey	Yes 14%
2021 HFRS Pulse Survey	Yes 5.5%

**What have the Service's measures of organisational culture and bullying shown?**

10. Allegations of bullying are fortunately infrequent but always taken seriously and thoroughly investigated; most often employees choose to raise these as grievances. The majority of allegations of this nature raised since November 2018 have not been evidenced and therefore have not been upheld. There have been eight cases during this period, 5 of which were not upheld and 3 which were partially upheld.
11. Mediation is always offered as a 'repair' mechanism to damaged relationships and in most cases, as soon as possible following issues arising to deal with the issue as early as possible before it escalates. Additional internal mediators were trained during 2021 to allow for both a swift response and a range of individuals with differing backgrounds and styles to carry out the mediation.
12. Any complaints of this nature, whether they are routed through the Dignity at Work Policy or the Grievance Policy, are documented at every stage. Confirmation letters are issued to the complainant about the outcome of each stage and further options open to them such as an appeal and mediation.
13. Managers work very closely with the HR Service Partner for each area, which ensures that specialist HR knowledge is shared when dealing with these often sensitive and contentious matters and the manager is fully supported.
14. Data relating to grievances and disciplinary matters is uploaded to Firewatch, which feeds into the Power Bi system. A bespoke tracker system is also maintained and monitored by the HR team to enable our data to be further interrogated, providing an understanding of any trends, patterns and 'hot spots' which can then be managed in a timely and appropriate manner.
15. The staff survey data shows a significant reduction in the number of staff reporting that they feel bullied or harassed since 2018 to present.
16. The EAP report identified one individual citing mismanagement, which is currently being investigated (none specifically related to bullying and harassment) (report date up to and including 28/02/22).

**How has the Service responded to the recommendations made by the Committee at its meeting of 5 July 2021 (Minute 70/21 refers).**

**The recommendations of the committee in July were as follows:**

- (a) That the Service use its exit interviews and appraisals process to develop a clearer understanding of bullying and changes to its organisational culture;
- (b) That initial feedback on the progress of recommendation (a) be reported during the follow-up anti-bullying campaign item due to be heard on 11 April 2022;
- (c) That the Service obtain high-quality data through a survey of staff in order to develop a clearer understanding of bullying and organisational culture than that afforded by the HMICFRS surveys of 2018 and 2020, and
- (d) That the report for the follow-up anti-bullying campaign item contain feedback from the relevant unions.

17. In relation to recommendations (a) and (b), this paper articulates the progress made from the original bullying and harassment campaign and the follow up initiatives, and whilst it is difficult to pinpoint one single activity, the combination of the actions described in section 2 of this report, together with the investment in leadership training for our leaders as supportive leaders, has contributed to the reduction of staff feeling they have been bullied or harassed. In addition to these initiatives, the embedding of the EAP and the formation of staff forums (which have been developed since the last report), members of whom have been used as an informal support by staff and seen as a safe and confidential environment for individuals to access away from their normal place of work.
18. We have conducted four staff impact assessments during COVID with the message of supportive management to assist staff with any difficulties during these challenging times, the results from these have been positive and encouraging with the majority of staff feeling supported and safe. Whilst the Service appraisal process does not specifically ask or require staff to discuss or disclose any bullying or harassment, it does have a section on welfare during which any negative impacts, personal or work related, can be disclosed and discussed. During the annual review of the Performance and Development Review (PDR) Appraisal process, the evaluation randomly selects 5% of PDR forms for analysis. To date no evidence of reporting bullying and harassment have been found from the random selection.
19. In relation to (c), the number of grievances linked to bullying has remained very low as evidenced earlier in this paper. There have been no disciplinary cases dealing with bullying during this period and no references to bullying on any of the exit interview forms submitted by leavers. The HMICFRS surveys also show a reduction in those who experience bullying from 26% of respondents in 2018/19 to 14% of respondents in 2020, and further still to 5.5% in 2021. Whilst we aspire to reduce this further, to the point bullying does not exist within the organisation, this is a very promising reduction.
20. Whilst it is difficult to demonstrate the improvements are a direct result of our campaigns, it is probable that staff are more aware of procedures (for dealing with) and expectations (in terms of behaviours), relating to bullying and harassment. Furthermore, it is likely that staff are more likely to report instances of bullying due to the increase in awareness and associated confidence with processes.



21. Whilst we previously adhered to our in-house developed HFRS values and principles, we have now adopted the NFCC Code of Ethics which has been well accepted, widely publicised and the subject of a training package on Learn Pro – which all staff are required to complete. This has undoubtedly also strengthened our corporate messages regarding expected behaviours in the workplace and reduced the potential for bullying to arise.
22. Our representative bodies have been requested to provide a summary of their views regarding bullying and all the actions the organisation have taken to eradicate this inappropriate behaviour. At the time of writing this report, no feedback has been received.

### **STRATEGIC PLAN COMPATIBILITY**

23. The report supports the delivery of our Strategic Plan 2021-2024 through pillar 3 'We value and support the people we employ.'

### **FINANCIAL/RESOURCES/VALUE FOR MONEY IMPLICATIONS**

24. None directly, all initiatives within this report will be delivered within existing budgets.

### **LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

25. The report outlines several areas which contribute to the Service's compliance with the Equality Act 2010 and numerous other aspects of Employment Law.

### **EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT/HR IMPLICATIONS**

26. The contents of this report are directly related to improvements in the way that dignity at work is managed within the Service. These are important aspects in ensuring that our workforce feel safe and supported, in turn promoting our aspiration of being an Employer of choice within the Humberside area; a key aspect of our Positive Action Strategy.

### **CORPORATE RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS**

27. Many of the areas explored within this report feature as key items on the Services Risk Register and within Improvement Plans.

### **HEALTH AND SAFETY IMPLICATIONS**

28. None arising directly.

### **COMMUNICATION ACTIONS ARISING**

29. None arising directly.

### **DETAILS OF CONSULTATION AND/OR COLLABORATION**

30. None arising directly.

### **BACKGROUND PAPERS AVAILABLE FOR ACCESS**

31. GAS June 2021 paper – attached as Appendix A

## **RECOMMENDATIONS RESTATED**

32. The GAS committee take assurance from the progress that the Service is making in relation to Bullying and Harassment, and that due to the steady decline of staff reporting feeling bullied or harassed and with the organisation support in place, that this is embedded into business as usual for HR/OD to continue to monitor and report alongside other normal employee relations performance reports.

**Christine Cooper**

Officer Contact: Christine Cooper, Executive Director of People and Development  
Humberside Fire & Rescue Service  
Summergroves Way  
Kingston upon Hull  
07976 812653

Our ref: CC/MAS

Date: 30/03/22

<b>Governance, Audit and Scrutiny Committee 2021</b>	
<b>Appendix A</b>	<b>Report by the Director of People and Development</b>
<p style="text-align: center;">REPORT EXECUTIVE SUMMARY</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Anti-Bullying Campaign (Assessing the Issue)</b></p> <p>This paper responds to the following questions\requests as part of the GAS Committee Scrutiny Programme.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>How does the Service define bullying (what guidance has informed its policies etc)?</b></li> <li>2. <b>To what extent is bullying an issue within the Service?</b></li> <li>3. <b>How does the Service measure and understand its organisational culture and bullying in its workforce?</b></li> <li>4. <b>What have staff surveys shown with regard to bullying?</b></li> <li>5. <b>How many staff surveys have been conducted since the Service's last inspection by HMICFRS?</b></li> <li>6. <b>Is the Service confident that its anti-bullying campaign has/will improve its culture?</b></li> </ol>	

## RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The GAS committee take assurance from the progress that the Service is making in relation to Bullying and Harassment.

## REPORT DETAIL

### **How does the Service define bullying (what guidance has informed its policies etc)?**

2. A definition of bullying is provided in our dignity at work policy and is as follows: -  
  
*'Bullying is characterised as offensive, intimidating, malicious or insulting behaviour, an abuse or misuse of power through means that undermine, humiliate, denigrate or injure the recipient.'*
3. This is directly informed by the ACAS definition, which is often referred to as best practice, and used as a comparator in Employment Tribunal cases concerning bullying and harassment claims.
4. Our dignity at work policy was fully consulted on with the TUs, wider HFRS consultation and implemented in October 2019. At the same time, we developed and launched HFRS 'Zero Tolerance to Bullying Campaign' which included: -
  - a) Displaying of awareness posters in every Service building
  - b) Video message from the CFO encouraging bullying to be reported and specifying that it would be dealt with seriously
  - c) Supply of confidential contact numbers on posters
  - d) Screensavers that run automatically on every Service PC
  - e) An eLearning training and assessment package on Learn Pro that every member of staff was required to complete.
  - f) Credit card sized contact details distributed throughout all Service premises
5. This approach is further complemented by employees having access to Blue Light Champions who they can approach for support – more of which were trained in 2019, and latterly with the launch of our Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) provision where employees can access support 24/7 on any matter they would like assistance with.
6. The eLearning module for Bullying and Harassment includes the same definition and provides a definition for harassment as well as guidance on banter in the workplace. A section within the module identifies differences between legitimate performance management and bullying, including examples of behaviours associated with both.

### **To what extent is bullying an issue within the Service?**

7. During the period November 2018 to May 2021, eight grievances were raised which alleged bullying. Of these, 3 were not upheld, 2 were partially upheld, with mediation being recommended, and 1 grievance was resolved under Stage 1, the informal process, also with mediation being offered. It should be noted that, with regard to the 2 grievances that were partially upheld, no subsequent appeals were received by the Service. Another grievance was received, where the individual resigned shortly thereafter, no further action was taken by said individual and any pertinent time limits have now passed. Following the afore-mentioned resignation, a counter grievance

was also received however this was not pursued by the individual due to the individual who was originally aggrieved resigning.

8. Throughout the same period, five disciplinary cases arose, which alleged bullying. All 5 cases were linked and were at the same location. Of these, 3 matters resulted in a final written warning, 1 matter resulted in a written warning and 1 matter was found to have no case to answer. It should be noted that with regard to the 4 individuals who received a sanction, no subsequent appeals were received by the Service. Further individual support and development is now in place at this location to promote a positive culture and mitigate against the potential for reoccurrence.

#### **How does the Service measure and understand its organisational culture and bullying in its workforce?**

9. Allegations of bullying are fortunately infrequent but always taken seriously and thoroughly investigated; most often employees choose to raise these as grievances. The majority of allegations of this nature raised since November 2018 have not been evidenced and therefore have not been upheld.
10. Mediation is always offered as a 'repair' mechanism to damaged relationships and in most cases as soon as possible following issues arising to deal with the issue as early as possible before it escalates.
11. All complaints of this nature, whether they are routed through the dignity at work policy or the grievance policy, are documented at every stage. Confirmation letters are issued to the complainant about the outcome of each stage and further stages or options open to them.
12. Managers work very closely with the HR Service Partner for each area which ensures that specialist HR knowledge is shared when dealing with these often sensitive and contentious matters and the manager is fully supported.
13. Data relating to grievances and disciplinary matters is uploaded to Firewatch, which feeds into the Power Bi system. A bespoke tracker system is also maintained and monitored by the HR team. The tracker system is currently being developed to enable our data to be further interrogated, providing an understanding of any trends, patterns and 'hot spots' which can then be managed in a timely and appropriate manner.

#### **What have staff surveys shown with regard to bullying?**

##### HMICFRS Surveys

14. The HMICFRS 2018/19 staff survey received 206 responses, of the responses 26% reported feeling bullied or harassed. The survey indicated that the source of bullying & harassment was often someone more senior to them and that role/level/rank in the Service was the cause. Respondents were split on whether they had reported the bullying and harassment they had experienced, but where they had it tends to have been informally.
15. In August 2020, HMICFRS conducted a further staff survey which received 119 responses, of the responses 14% identified that they had felt bullied or harassed at work. Further detail from the survey indicated that the source of bullying and harassment was most often someone more senior to them and that performance at

work is often the cause. The majority of respondents advise that they had reported the bullying and harassment and that they had done so informally.

16. HMICFRS include the following narrative to consider when interpreting the results of their surveys: -
- a) *The results are not representative of the opinions and attitudes of a service's whole workforce. The survey was self-selecting, and the response rate ranged from 8 percent to 31 percent of a service's workforce. So, any findings should be considered alongside the service's overall response rate, which is cited in the report.*
  - b) *To protect respondents' anonymity and allow completion on shared devices, it was not possible to limit responses to one per person. So, it is possible that a single person could have completed the survey multiple times. It is also possible that the survey could have been shared and completed by people other than its intended respondents.*
  - c) *Due to the limitations set out above, the results from the staff survey should only be used to provide an indicative measure of service performance.*

#### HFRS Organisation Health Check

17. HFRS invested in a detailed and thorough Organisational Health diagnostic during 2018/19 which included an organisational health check questionnaire aimed at a diagonal slice by employee contributions/completions across the Service.
18. The subsequent report (February 2019) identified 12 themes under 'daily workplace features' bullying behaviour featured as 11 (mean score rate 1.3) out of 12 and being exposed to violent and aggressive behaviour featured 12 (mean score rate of 1.27) out of 12 that were reported on in the report. The findings from this survey suggested a low proportion of staff reported feeling or being bullied in the workplace at this time. The main factor that contributed to better workplace conditions was supportive leadership. The Service has subsequently developed and implemented a leadership framework focussing on developing supportive leaders within the Service.
19. The findings from the health check questionnaire, and internal grievance data did not match the findings from the 2018/19 HMIC inspection where 26% of those that responded, reported feeling bullied and harassed. As a result of this feedback, HFRS made every effort to set up and publicise supportive mechanisms, including launching of zero tolerance to bullying campaign and training for all staff.

#### Zero Tolerance Campaign Communications

20. Further to the CFOs video message regarding our zero tolerance to bullying, and messages to staff via the Siren Bulletin about how to report such matters, in November 2018, a message was printed on every employee payslip that if anyone wished to report bullying, they could do so confidentially and anonymously should they wish, to the Head of HR.
21. This resulted in two anonymous letters – in the same style: -
- a) A female on-call FF from Cleethorpes who had resigned not long after her training. When investigated, the ex-employee was horrified and stated that she had not written the letter and denied being bullied in any way.
  - b) A male FF (also from Cleethorpes) who's bullying claim had already been addressed previously (resulting in dismissals and relocation of implicated staff).

22. No further cases were ever reported in this way which led us to conclude that either employees had nothing they wished to report, or if they did, they were not prepared to do so, even anonymously.

**How many staff surveys have been conducted since the Service's last inspection by HMICFRS?**

23. HMICFRS carried out a further staff survey in August 2020 as detailed above.
24. Whilst not specifically focussed on bullying and harassment, four Staff Impact Assessments (SIA) have also been undertaken over the last year. The SIAs were undertaken in conjunction with line managers and as such there was line manager/staff dialogue to understand the impact and support required for staff during various points of the pandemic. The SIA and dates were as follows:
- a) First SIA (report date 280520) conducted for staff working from home – 202 responses.
  - b) Second SIA (report date 220720) conducted for staff working from home – 186 responses.
  - c) Third SIA (report date 251020) conducted for all staff – 482 responses.
  - d) Fourth SIA (report date 040621) conducted for all staff – 919 responses.
25. The SIA returns have been analysed and separate reports produced for each period, the reports have been considered by the Influenza Management Team and the (COVID) Recovery Group latterly with associated actions undertaken by the respective groups.
26. We acknowledge the need to conduct further organisational staff surveys and have agreed that several shorter thematic surveys ran throughout the year will be more beneficial than a long annual survey. The Organisational Development and Corporate Communications teams are scoping this work and identifying the opportune time to conduct the first of this new style of survey.

**Is the Service confident that its anti-bullying campaign has/will improve its culture?**

27. Our commitment to zero tolerance is evidenced every time a member of staff turns on their computer and sees our zero tolerance screensavers. Our internal communications campaign continues with posters in the workplace backed up by regular Siren bulletin entries and video updates by the CFO, showing leadership on this issue from the very top of the organisation. Staff are openly and consistently reminded how they can report such matters through a variety of routes and how to seek support.
28. The numbers of grievances and disciplinary cases linked to bullying has remained relatively low as evidenced earlier in this paper. The HMICFRS surveys also show a reduction in those who experience bullying from 26% of respondents in 2018/19 to 14% of respondents in 2020. Whilst we aspire to reduce this further, to the point bullying does not exist within the organisation, this is a promising reduction.

29. The 2020 survey also identifies that the majority of respondents are more likely to report instances of bullying, this is an increase from 2018/19 where an even split was referenced. The majority of respondents in the 2020 survey identified they had used an informal route.
30. Whilst it is difficult to demonstrate the improvements are a direct result of our campaigns, it is probable that staff are more aware of procedures (for dealing with) and expectations (in terms of behaviours) relating to bullying and harassment. Furthermore, it is likely that staff are more likely to report instances of bullying due to the increase in awareness and associated confidence with processes.
31. We are due to launch the refresh of the eLearning module as we aim to keep the subject in every employee's mind. The CFO has referenced the grievance procedure in his latest video, identifying its importance as a Service improvement tool and judging by the grievances that have been raised, it does not appear that employees are afraid to use our processes. We have demonstrated with every investigation how thoroughly we examine these allegations which should enable greater confidence of both managers and staff to raise and deal with these issues appropriately.
32. We have evaluated the supportive leadership behaviours programme run for senior and middle managers, this together with the launch of the adoption of the NFCC Code of Ethics will emphasise and reinforce the behaviours and standards that we expect from our leaders within the Service. A programme of CPD via the well-established leadership forum will aid development, thus having a better impact on improving workplace culture within the Service.
33. We have conducted 4 staff impact assessments during COVID with the message of supportive management to assist staff with any difficulties during these challenging times, the results from these have been positive and encouraging with the majority of staff feeling supported and safe.

#### STRATEGIC PLAN COMPATIBILITY

34. The report supports the delivery of our Strategic Plan 2021-2024 through pillar 3 'We value and support the people we employ.'

#### FINANCIAL/RESOURCES/VALUE FOR MONEY IMPLICATIONS

35. None directly, all initiatives within this report will be delivered within existing budgets.

#### LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

36. The report outlines several areas which contribute to the Service's compliance with the Equality Act 2010 and numerous other aspects of Employment Law.

#### EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT/HR IMPLICATIONS

37. The contents of this report are directly related to improvements in the way that dignity at work is managed within the Service. These are important aspects in ensuring that our workforce feel safe and supported in turn promoting our aspiration of being an Employer of choice within the Humberside area; a key aspect of our Positive Action Strategy.



## CORPORATE RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

38. Many of the areas explored within this report feature as key items on the Services Risk Register and within Improvement Plans.

## HEALTH AND SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

39. None arising directly.

## COMMUNICATION ACTIONS ARISING

40. None arising directly.

## DETAILS OF CONSULTATION AND/OR COLLABORATION

41. None arising directly.

## BACKGROUND PAPERS AVAILABLE FOR ACCESS

42. Dignity at Work Policy – attached as Appendix A  
43. HMICFRS Survey 2018\19 – attached as Appendix B  
44. HMICFRS Survey 2020 – attached as Appendix C

## RECOMMENDATIONS RESTATED

45. The GAS committee take assurance from the progress that the Service is making in relation to Bullying and Harassment.

**J. Kirby**

Officer Contact: Jason Kirby ☎ 01482 567185  
Director of People and Development

Humberside Fire & Rescue Service  
Summergroves Way  
Kingston upon Hull



## **GAS COMMITTEE SCRUTINY PROGRAMME 2022/23**

### **SUMMARY**

1. This paper summarises the potential scrutiny topics, proposed by the Strategic Leadership Team, for the Governance, Audit and Scrutiny Committee's (GAS) Scrutiny Programme 2022/23. The GAS Committee will programme six scrutiny items for completion during 2022/23.
2. A list of ten proposed topics are included at Appendix 1 to this report for consideration by the Authority.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

3. That Members consider and shortlist scrutiny topics for the 2022/23 programme for GAS Committee consideration.

### **PUBLIC SCRUTINY PROCESS**

4. Public scrutiny is a corporate process undertaken by the GAS Committee, appointed by the Fire Authority for its breadth of professional experience.
5. Six areas for scrutiny were identified by the Committee for its 2021/22 programme:
  - Anti-Bullying Campaign (Assessing the Issue)
  - Promotion Within Uniformed Roles
  - Implementation of the NFCC Code of Ethics
  - Management of Risk Information by On-Call Fire Stations
  - Workforce Monitoring and Planning (Revision of Workforce Plan)
  - Anti-Bullying Campaign (Progress Update)
6. The proposed scrutiny topics have been identified by the Strategic Leadership Team as areas worthy of independent scrutiny.

### **STRATEGIC PLAN COMPATIBILITY**

7. This paper supports the achievement of the Strategic Plan through the provision of independent scrutiny of activity.

### **FINANCIAL/RESOURCES/VALUE FOR MONEY IMPLICATIONS**

8. Independent scrutiny contributes towards efficiency review activity.

### **LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

9. None directly arising.

### **EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT/HR IMPLICATIONS**

10. None directly arising.

### **CORPORATE RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS**

11. Scrutiny of performance provides an assurance that arising risks are being mitigated.

## HEALTH AND SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

12. None directly arising.

## COMMUNICATION ACTIONS ARISING

13. GAS Committee papers are publicly available via the HFRS Website.

## DETAILS OF CONSULTATION

14. The Strategic Leadership Team regarding scrutiny topics.

## RECOMMENDATIONS RESTATED

15. That Members consider and shortlist scrutiny topics for the 2022/23 programme for GAS Committee consideration.

**M SUTCLIFFE**

Officer Contact: Simon Rhodes  
Head of Corporate Assurance

☎ 01482 567479

Humberside Fire & Rescue Service  
Summergroves Way  
Kingston upon Hull

SR  
11 March 2022

## **Draft GAS Scrutiny Topics – 2022/23**

- 1. Procurement processes**  
Evaluation and assurance of process and corporate safeguards
- 2. Partnership working**  
Evaluation and assurance of Agreements, Risks, Performance/appraisal
- 3. Core Skills Framework**  
Evaluation and assurance of implementation/embedding and benefit realisation
- 4. EDI Equality Impact Analysis**  
Evaluation of Quality Assurance process
- 5. Apprenticeships Scheme Adoption**  
Evaluation of scale and diversity of adoption
- 6. Firewatch Data Quality Assurance**  
Evaluation of Quality Assurance process
- 7. Fire Standards**  
Evaluation and assurance of Management and Implementation process
- 8. Business Continuity**  
Evaluation and assurance of planning arrangements for Industrial Action
- 9. GDPR**  
Evaluation and assurance of process to review compliance and embed principles and practices
- 10. Management of FOI requests**  
Evaluation and assurance of process