



Safest People, Safest Places

Combined Fire Authority

13 June 2022

Core Code of Ethics Implementation

Report of Director of Emergency Response

Purpose of Report

1. The purpose of this report is to inform Members of the implementation of the Core Code of Ethics (CCOE) which have been produced specifically for Fire and Rescue Services by the National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC), the Local Government Association (LGA) and the Association of Police and Crime Commissioners (APCC).

Background

2. The CCOE, attached as Appendix A, sets out the principles and standards of behaviour that will promote, reinforce, and support the highest standards from the Members of County Durham and Darlington Fire and Rescue Authority (CDDFRA) and from everyone who works within, or on behalf of, County Durham and Darlington Fire and Rescue Service (CDDFRS). The Core Code requires everyone in the sector to prevent unprofessional conduct by questioning behaviour which falls below expected standards. Additionally, it supports reporting or taking action against such behaviour.

Implementation Plan and Key Activities

3. Internally a project initiation document (PID) was created in June 2021 following the CCOE being published by the NFCC and this was then aligned to the Fire Standard once published.
4. The aims of the project were to:
 - a) Implement the CCOE into the Service and Fire Authority and integrate into processes and procedures.
 - b) Ensure effective communication with the workforce to develop understanding and outline the expectations of the CCOE.
 - c) Design a range of effective tools to support implementation and understanding.

Key activity for implementation

5. Several key pieces of work were undertaken to ensure the CCOE was implemented across Service documents, processes, systems, and ways of working. They include:
 - a) Including references to the CCOE in the Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP) and other strategic documents.
 - b) Amending the Constitution to include the CCOE.
 - c) Aligning the CCOE to our values and behaviours framework.
 - d) Reviewing our Being the Best (BTB) handbook and reissuing to all staff and new employees.
 - e) Reviewing key procedures, such as the Code of Conduct, the Disciplinary Policy and Procedure and the Appraisal Procedure to ensure the CCOE is embedded.
 - f) Designing e-learning modules for all staff to complete, linked to the Leadership Framework.
 - g) Amending the appraisal system to ensure CCOE compliance.
 - h) Ethical leadership development included in the Leadership Programmes.
 - i) Having a dedicated senior leader who is responsible for promoting the CCOE.

Compliance for Members and employees

6. Each member of the Fire Authority was asked to sign a compliance form to state they understand the CCOE and that they would abide by these in day-to-day activities. These are held by the Governance Team and renewed on an annual basis at the AGM. All elected members signed the form and therefore committed to abide by the CCOE.
7. Employees were all required to complete an e-learning module relevant for their level in the Service. As of the 31 May, 92% of employees have completed the relevant module.
8. Line managers were also asked to confirm compliance with the Code in the end of year appraisal process to ensure learning has been put into practice in day-to-day activities.
9. Compliance against the Fire Standard is complete with all activities being fully compliant.

Recommendations

10. Members are asked to:
 - a) **Note** and **comment** on the contents of this report.