

## MERSEYSIDE FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY

MEETING OF THE:	POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE		
DATE:	29 JULY 2021	REPORT NO:	CFO/042/21
PRESENTING OFFICER	RIA GROVES		
RESPONSIBLE OFFICER:	RIA GROVES	REPORT AUTHOR:	RIA GROVES
OFFICERS CONSULTED:	STRATEGIC LEADERSHIP TEAM		
TITLE OF REPORT:	MEMBERS CODE OF CONDUCT - CORE CODE OF ETHICS		

APPENDICES:	APPENDIX A:	MEMBERS CODE OF CONDUCT
	APPENDIX B:	CORE CODE OF ETHICS FOR FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICES

### Purpose of Report

1. To request that Members, consider the Core Code of Ethics and approve its incorporation within the Members Code of Conduct as detailed in Appendix A

### Recommendation

2. That Members;
  - a. Note the Core Code of Ethics published by the National Fire Chiefs Council ('NFCC');
  - b. Approve the incorporation of the core code of ethics into the Members Code of Conduct as detailed in Appendix A and
  - c. Approve the constitution to be updated to reflect the inclusion of the Core Code of Ethics to the Members Code of Conduct (as per Appendix A)

### Introduction and Background

3. The Core Code of Ethics for Fire and Rescue Services has been produced as a result of work undertaken by the National Fire Chiefs Council, the Local Government Association and the Association of Police and Crime Commissioners and consultation within the sector.
4. The Core Code of Ethics sets out five ethical principles; Putting Our Communities First, Integrity, Dignity and Respect, Leadership, and Equality, Diversity and Inclusion. The basis of these principles is to promote good behaviour and challenge inappropriate behaviour.

5. It is recommended as part of the guidance on the Core Code of Ethics that Fire and Rescue Authorities demonstrate their commitment to the Core Code of Ethics by championing its use.
6. While the Seven Principles of Public Life are the foundation of the ethical principles in the Core Code of Ethics which are already included within the Members Code of Conduct, it is proposed to Members to include the ethical principles in addition to the current draft of the Members Code of Conduct. The adoption of the ethical principles within the Members own Code of Conduct not only champions its use but demonstrates the Authority's commitment to upholding such standards.
7. Members will recall that on 20<sup>th</sup> May 2021 Members approved a new Members Code of Conduct which was incorporated further to the Model Code of Conduct for Members developed and issued by the LGA. Further to discussion across the Liverpool City Region a localised version for the Region was proposed and agreed by Members. In order to remain as close as possible to the City Region Code of Conduct for Members it is proposed that the addition of the ethical principles from the Core Code of Ethics be added as an appendix within the Code. These are highlighted in yellow within Appendix A.

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#### **Equality and Diversity Implications**

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8. The incorporation of the Core Code of Ethics and ethical principles within the Members Code of Conduct will only further strengthen and embed the standards Members conduct themselves to, which includes ED&I, a copy of which is contained within Appendix B.

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#### **Staff Implications**

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9. There is no direct implication to staff arising out of this report notwithstanding the impact the Code has for staff in regard to training and advice to Members which is provided currently in any regard.

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#### **Legal Implications**

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10. There are no direct legal implications arising from this report as the Authority is already in compliance with the Localism Act 2011 as it has a code of conduct for members and co-opted members when they are acting in that capacity; however, the inclusion of the ethical principles from the Core Code of Ethics will allow MFRA to adhere to the guidance and best practice recommended by the NFCC and the LGA for all Fire and Rescue Authorities.

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#### **Financial Implications & Value for Money**

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11. There are no direct financial implications arising from this report.

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#### **Risk Management, Health & Safety, and Environmental Implications**

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12. Considering best practice for fire and rescue services and implementing improvements will help maintain sound corporate governance and the integrity of local authority decision making, minimising risk of challenge, corruption, improper conduct and standards complaints.
13. There are no Environmental Implications that directly arise out of this report.

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Contribution to Our Vision: *To be the best Fire & Rescue Service in the UK. One team, putting its communities first.*

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14. Having a robust Members Code of Conduct adhered to by all Members will demonstrate that Members are accountable and transparent to the community they serve. The Code is designed to protect the democratic role of Members, encourage good conduct and safeguard the public's trust in local government, and the proposed amendments only serves to strengthen this.

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## **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

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## **GLOSSARY OF TERMS**

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- MFRA** Merseyside Fire and Rescue Authority is the physical and legal entity. When writing reports MFRA is the "object".
- MFRS** Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service is the service provided by MFRA. When writing reports MFRS is the "action"
- E.G.** You are employed by the Authority (MFRA). The job you do forms part of the Service (MFRS) provided by the Authority (MFRA).  
If in doubt use MFRA.