



Essex County Council

Essex Police, Fire and Crime Panel: Ethics and Integrity Sub-Committee

14:00	Thursday, 31 October 2019	Committee Room 4, County Hall, Chelmsford, CM1 1QH
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For information about the meeting please ask for:
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2	Minutes of Previous Meeting To approve the minutes of the meeting held on the 18 April 2019.	5 - 8
3	Continuous Culture Change Strategy To receive a report from Karl Edwards, Director of Corporate Services, Office of the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner for Essex.	9 - 68
4	Ethics and Integrity Framework To receive information on the arrangements of the Ethics and Integrity Framework within the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner's office.	69 - 86
5	Date of Next Meeting To consider a date for the next meeting.	

Exempt Items

(During consideration of these items the meeting is not likely to be open to the press and public)

The following items of business have not been published on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information falling within Part I of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972. Members are asked to consider whether or not the press and public should be excluded during the consideration of these items. If so it will be necessary for the meeting to pass a formal resolution:

That the press and public are excluded from the meeting during the consideration of the remaining items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information falling within Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972, the specific paragraph(s) of Schedule 12A engaged being set out in the report or appendix relating to that item of business.

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Agenda item 1

Committee: Essex Police, Fire and Crime Panel

Enquiries to: Victoria Freeman, Senior Democratic Services Officer

Membership, Apologies, Substitutions and Declarations of Interest

Recommendations:

To note

1. Membership as shown below
2. Apologies and substitutions
3. Declarations of interest to be made by Members in accordance with the Members' Code of Conduct

Membership (Quorum: 2)

Councillor W Schmitt
Councillor G Isaacs
Councillor M Maddocks
Kay Odysseos

Representing

Braintree District Council (Chairman)
Castle Point Borough Council
Essex County Council (Vice-Chairman)
Independent Member

**Minutes of the meeting of the Essex Police, Fire and Crime Panel:
Ethics and Integrity Sub-Committee, held in Committee Room 5 County
Hall, Chelmsford, CM1 1QH on 18 April 2019 at 10.00 a.m.**

Present	Representing
Pippa Brent-Isherwood	Chief Executive and Monitoring Officer, Office of the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner for Essex
Cllr Penny Channer	Maldon District Council
John Gili-Ross	Independent Member
Cllr Tony Hedley	Essex County Council
Roger Hirst	Essex Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner
Geoffrey Isaacs	Castle Point Borough Council
Cllr Malcolm Maddocks	Essex County Council
Kay Odysseos	Independent Member
Wendy Schmitt (Chairman)	Braintree District Council
Jo Turton	Chief Fire Officer and Chief Executive, Essex Fire and Rescue Service

Also present

Andy Gribben Senior Democratic Services Officer and Clerk to the meeting

1 Apologies for Absence and Notices of Substitution

There were no apologies for absence

2 Standards within Essex County Fire and Rescue Service

Mr Roger Hirst, Essex Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner, introduced Jo Turton Chief Fire Officer and Chief Executive, Essex Fire and Rescue Service, who would, he suggested, advise members of the Sub-Committee on the defined values of the service and report on what had been already achieved, the foundations that had been laid and processes being adopted to allow the development of improved behaviours and a better culture within the service.

Ms Turton advised members of the Sub-Committee that the progress made so far included:

- A near completion of the 'rank to role' programme that would lead to a more flexible structure.
- A resolution of all but one of the outstanding and historic cases.
- A review of the Senior Leadership team which has included the appointment of Rick Hilton (Cambs) as Deputy and Carl Edwards from the Ambulance Services.

- A review of how to promote talent from within in 'developmental roles' to encourage internal motivation and also review the gender-balance on the Service Leadership Team.
- Positive encouragement for external challenge so that key stakeholders and the public see that priorities for continuous improvement are considered seriously.
- LGA Peer Review to be used as a means to prepare for inspections.

It was also noted that there had not been any employee or industrial relations dispute for two years, as well as a significant drop in disciplinaries coupled with a desire to identify at an early stage, possible areas of grievance. It was considered that early informal intervention led to better outcomes.

Ms Turton also advised members of the Sub-Committee that the Leadership Team had adopted a 'You Said – We Did' approach to be seen to be providing swift feedback to issues raised by staff. It had been identified that that this was more than simply the implementation of a staff suggestion scheme. Such schemes had failed in the past as there had not been a functioning mechanism to drive improvements. Whilst there had been no shortage of ideas, Management had often been unable to respond. There was the need to embrace a cultural change across the whole service.

In response to questions from members Ms Turton advised the Sub-Committee that:

- There was currently a promising number of applicants to vacancies. There had been recently 600 applicants for 50 advertised positions which, she suggested, was a reflection that, notwithstanding the difficulties that had been facing the service in recent years, the public still held the service in high regard. She noted that the recruitment had positively targeted diverse and under-represented demographic groups through the use of social media. This had proved successful.
- There was a need for new recruits to be assured that they were being employed in a 'safe place' where confidential conversations could take place and where their health and well-being was assured. Initiatives to bring this about included the setting up of telephone lines, one-to-one conversations with senior management, positive inclusivity and importance being laid upon the development of a professional environment. Such initiatives also seem to have re-energised longer-serving firefighters.
- It was early days for the Fire Standards Board which will be looking at subjects such as leadership, diversity and conduct. Whilst there was as yet no representation from the National Association on the Standards Boards it was generally considered that such representation would provide balance and help forge a better relationship for the future with Fire Services Management. Mr Hirst, The Essex Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner, stated that he would support such a move.
- The National initiative to permit graduate entry and fast-tracking into management was seen as a key way to improve the culture of the organisation.

- There was an encouraging use of the practice of permitting 'day-duty officer riding' i.e. those officers who were working in technical fields maintaining their operational capabilities and skills by deploying them into on-call fire stations where there is an identified need.
- Appraisals continued to be undertaken with 75% now complete. However, such appraisals also contributed to the required cultural change and the quality of appraisal was considered to be more important than the quantity completed.
- Operational training was a risk-critical issue as the safety of fire-fighters and the public was paramount. To this end, £1million has been transferred from financial reserves into the budget for operational training. There has also been finance made available to refurbish local training facilities that allows training to take place more locally and thereby reduces the need to take firefighters off-watch. Station Managers are also being trained to train.
- There were also improvements being made in the area of Community Safety, Fire Prevention and Protection – being undertaken with knowledge of local priorities and risks for better deployment of resources.

3 Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner's Ethics and Integrity Update.

Mr Roger Hirst, Essex Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner, advised the members of the Sub-Committee that, in addition to that which they had already heard from Ms Turton the Fire Brigade's Union were in discussions concerning their terms and conditions of employment. He stressed that it was important that the public were confident that they were getting value for money.

Ongoing discussions for local agreements included plans for more holistic work with the police and ambulance service, involving searching for missing persons, trapped persons, prevention of, not just fire, but also trips and falls.

4 Future Items for the Sub-Committee

There should be a report at the next meeting (probably in about six-months' time) on the future work of the Sub-Committee which was to include:

- The Strategic Guidance in the Constitution that needs to be refreshed in the Policies.
- Induction,
- Consultation,
- Standing Orders and
- Succession Planning.

5 Date of Next Meeting

To be arranged.

6 Any Other Business

There being no further business the meeting closed.

Chairman

Report title: Continued Culture Change Strategy	
Report to: Police Fire & Crime Panel - Ethics & Integrity Sub Committee	
Report author: Colette Black, Assistant Chief Executive Officer, People, Values and Culture, Office of the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner for Essex	
Date: 31 October 2019	For: Update and information
Enquiries to: Karl Edwards, Director of Corporate Services, Office of the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner for Essex karl.edwards@essex-fire.gov.uk	
County Divisions affected: All Essex	

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

This paper, which has been previously discussed and agreed within ECFRS and the OPF&CC, is presented to the sub-committee to provide information on progress already made and plans agreed.

2. RECOMMENDATION

That the Panel is requested to note the report, for information.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 As detailed in our Fire and Rescue Plan, we are committed to promoting a positive culture. We will do this so that we have a modern, forward-looking, innovative and collaborative culture that can anticipate and deliver against the changing needs of our communities. Our overarching objective is to have a safe and diverse workforce who we enable to perform well in a supportive culture underpinned by excellent training.
- 3.2 Our People Strategy (represented in figure 1 below) describes many of the ways that we will achieve this. This Continued Culture Change Strategy is one element of the People Strategy and particularly describes our approach to continuously developing a positive culture.
- 3.3 We know that when our people are genuinely valued in the workplace, they are more likely to be committed and active advocates of the Service.
- 3.4 We recognise that we need to continue refreshing and reinforcing our expectations of behaviours.

Figure 1 - The elements of our People Strategy



3.5 As described in the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner's Fire and Rescue Plan, we are promoting a positive culture and developing a cultural change programme that embeds a positive culture through:

- Values and Behaviours
- Recognition
- Communication
- Continuous improvement
- Developing manager self-awareness
- Recognising the benefits of reflecting the diversity of the communities we serve
- Strong effective leadership and development

3.6 These areas have become the work streams of our Culture Change Programme. We recognise that values, behaviours and actions are at the heart of culture.

3.7 The change that has already been achieved was set out in the 'Culture Change Update' paper presented to the Audit Committee in July 2019; this is attached for information at appendix 4. Culture Change is a priority that is monitored and evaluated by our People Strategy Board with regular updates to our Service Leadership Team (SLT).

4. OPTIONS AND ANALYSIS

The underpinning principles of our approach are;

- We have 'initiative fatigue' in many parts of the organisation so our approach is low key and simple, with a focus on being realistic, sustainable and achievable. We have started this phase of our culture change through a listening exercise titled 'Everyone Matters'.
- In each of our work streams we will seek to use enablers such as symbols, role models and rituals to reinforce positive culture at every opportunity. Cultural change is not something we can 'do' to people, but is a social process that happens through communication and we will therefore use these cultural nudges or enablers to facilitate this.
- We will seek to co-design our delivery with our people, using workshops and other 2-way opportunities such as Your Voice forums and Everyone Matters feedback to inform our approach.
- We will seek to identify, preserve and celebrate the strengths that make ECFRS a good place to work, while addressing areas of improvement and change.

5. BENEFITS AND RISK IMPLICATIONS

The next part of this paper covers the following:

- The cultural change we want to see in 12, 24, 36 months' time
- How will we deliver it
- How will we measure it
- How we will know we have been successful

Work stream	How we will know that it has been successful and how we will deliver it
Values and Behaviours	<p>Our people will feel that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Our published values are seen to be upheld by all the pivotal people in the organisation • Our values naturally translate into behaviours that are encouraged and practiced by all • Focus on demonstrating “fairness” as a key value-set • Our values are genuinely at the heart of how all our policies and processes operate <p>To do this we will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Test with our employees that our published values feel ‘right’ • Translate values into a series of behaviours and share these with all our employees • Develop clear additional behaviours for managers and members of SLT • Work with our employees to translate the values into behaviours that “bring them to life” • Review all our policies and our key processes to ensure our values and behaviours are clearly embedded, with particular focus on visible and felt ‘fairness’ of processes • Review the whole employee life cycle to identify opportunities to better embed our values, focussing initially on key “threshold” employee touchpoints such as recruitment, induction, appraisal etc.
Recognition	<p>Our people will feel that our reward and recognition arrangements fairly and openly recognise and celebrate:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Service delivery ○ Living our Values and behaviours ○ Use of initiative to achieve service excellence ○ Efficiency and effectiveness ○ Continuous improvement to achieve excellence ○ Effective Communication <p>Our people will feel that we value every person as an individual, and everyone feels able to participate, achieve their potential, and has a meaningful voice on matters that affect them.</p> <p>To do this we will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review our reward and recognition practices to ensure these; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Happen at both individual and team level ○ Use both informal and formal means ○ Are visible both internally and externally • Use our Dignity at Work Champion provision to ensure our people are able to contribute fully and are treated with respect, • Use our feedback from Everyone Matters to further inform plans, • Deliver Dignity at Work Phase 2 to address team bullying issues, • Provide safe and trusted opportunities for two-way communication.

Developing manager self-awareness	<p>Our people will feel that our leaders and managers have effective management and communication skills to help them get the best out of their people.</p> <p>The key tenets for behavioural change are self-development through self-awareness and self-realisation, so to do this we will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and run workshops that introduce managers to a people centred philosophy that prioritises staff motivation/ engagement and personal accountability, • Develop a performance approach that includes feedback at all levels, so that managers are encouraged to understand and reflect on their individual and collective capacity to influence people around them through their conscious and unconscious behaviours, • The delivery and presentation of this work will be approached as a shift of mind-set for managers - as opposed to a structured training programme - so that it becomes “The Fire and Rescue Way”.
Recognising the benefits of reflecting the diversity of the communities we serve	<p>Our people will feel that ECFRS accommodates a diverse workforce and actively seeks to remove hidden barriers to recruitment, retention and progression.</p> <p>To do this we will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continuously improve the diversity of the workforce to ensure it represents the community at large, • Continuously monitor, review and improve our recruitment, making progression routes clear and having retention approaches to support increased diversity and inclusion, • Where it is possible, offer flexible and inclusive working patterns, • Review the equality impact of all our organisational policies for differential impact: e.g. discipline and grievance policies, • Externally benchmark our Service as an employer of choice • Continuously refresh and reinforce education regarding inclusion and diversity e.g. neurodiversity awareness.
Effective Communication	<p>Our people will feel that the ability to communicate well is key for every person working for ECFRS, in order to build trust, maintain working relationships and be more productive.</p> <p>To do this we will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure all people and especially managers use two-way communication, preferably face-to-face whenever possible, to ensure lines of communication are as clear and accessible as possible, • We will recognise excellent examples of effective communication and why it is important to help support our culture.

<p>Continuous improvement</p>	<p>Our people will feel that they can do their best work and make a meaningful impact on ECFRS to make the Service the best it can be, and that this is recognized and rewarded.</p> <p>Our people will feel that we have exemplary processes and approaches that embed our values; support them to do their work effectively; and support our aspiration to be an employer of choice in Essex.</p> <p>To do this we will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop an infrastructure and mechanisms that enable teams and individual staff to unlock issues and develop innovative ideas, • Encourage people to speak out on areas and issues for improvement, with clarity on “what good looks like”, • Ensure that a framework exists to ensure ideas for improvement are captured, assessed and evaluated, • Recognise the individual or team involved in every idea that is developed and adopted, • Review the employee lifecycle with stakeholders to identify key touchpoints for both employee and manager, • Ensure that at each of these key touchpoints the experience for both employee and manager is values and behaviours based, professional, effective and efficient, • Ensure that up to date information is available in the right place, at the right time, in the right format.
<p>Strong effective leadership and development</p>	<p>Our people will feel that ECFRS is a place of opportunity, where talent is recognised, proactively supported and development is encouraged at all levels.</p> <p>To do this we will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build a strategy to develop a diverse, engaging and highly visible leadership and management community as a key determinant of the culture we wish to achieve, • Develop the skills of our leaders and managers to improve teamwork and performance, and thereby develop a culture of high performing and empowered teamwork, • Explore opportunities such as a direct entry scheme and accelerated internal development to address recruitment challenges, • Develop a suite of tools and processes to support all our people to develop and assess their skills in a way that benefits the Service and their own career goals, • Develop approaches for early identification for active management of our talent pipeline – both internal and external, • Ensure we have a succession policy in place, • Use our ‘Everyone Matters’ programme feedback to continue to drive our desired leadership culture.

What does this look like in 12, 24 and 36 months?

The high-level delivery plans at appendix 1 break down the culture change into the actions and enablers, nudges and metrics to be achieved in the next 12, 24 and 36 months.

When will we know that we have been successful?

Our people will feel that they can respond positively to the engagement statements detailed at appendix 2. We will test this annually via our employee engagement survey. On a quarterly basis we will run a pulse survey on an individual element of the question set.

6. IMPLICATIONS**6.1 Financial Implications**

The known costs attributed to each phase are accounted for within existing budgets.

6.2 Equality and Diversity Implications

We anticipate this strategy making a positive contribution to equality, inclusion, diversity and perception of fairness.

6.3 Workforce Engagement

This strategy has been created based on feedback from our workforce.

6.4 Legal Implications

None.

6.5 Health and Safety Implications

None.

High-level delivery plans

Key to owners	Colette Black – CB	Natalie Quickenden – NQ	Jenny Smith – JS	Nikki Geaves - NG
	Assistant Chief Executive Officer – People, Culture and Values	Assistant Director of Human Resources	Business Partner – People, Culture and Values	Business Partner – Inclusion and Diversity

Work stream	Where do we want to get to?	Timeframe	Actions, enablers and nudges that support our change	Owner
Values and Behaviours	Our values are at the heart of what we do and how we do it	1 July 2019-30 June 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ‘We are one team’ HQ Day for our employees • On-Call new joiners event to recognise “we are one team” • Relaunch and expand on of ‘a day in the life of’ • Cross-team group to review our Values 	JS JS NG CB
		1 July 2020-30 June 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relaunch our values and build behaviours that underpin these – linked to the national leadership framework • Complete embedding Values in all policies and processes • Embed Service wide event to celebrate “We are one team” 	CB JS JS
		1 July 2021-30 June 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Values and Behaviours fully embedded in our practices, our language and our recognition of “what good looks like here” 	CB
Recognition	We recognise our colleagues who make our Service better – whether that’s through service	1 July 2019-30 June 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reward and Recognition ‘Celebrating our People’ event – revise to include more operationally focused awards and utilising ‘everyone matters’ programme feedback • Thank you Thursdays • Cross-team group to review our recognition approach • Ongoing comms and actions around ‘Everyone Matters’ 	HP CB CB CB/JS

	delivery or living our values I am able to speak up on things that matter to me – and I'm listened to when I do.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Launch of next phase of Dignity at Work training • 1:1 Appraisal conversations developed to cover wellbeing and recognition better • Introduce a range of staff networks, channels, forums and opportunities • Introduce a suggestion scheme • Visibility and clarity on the role of the Dignity at Work Champions and how to access them 	NG NQ CB/JS JS NG
		1 July 2020-30 June 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to re-align Reward and Recognition to our values and priorities • Develop e-Thank you process for peer to peer feedback, aligned to Values and behaviours • Engagement survey revamped and revitalised • Encouragement for active participation in a range of forums contributing to organisational development • Process developed to support improved completion of People impact assessments for all new policies, policy updates and projects, and ensuring these are informed by Staff Networks as well as Representative Bodies. 	NQ JS CB/NQ CB NG
		1 July 2021-30 June 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Roll out and embedding of e-Thank you process for peer to peer feedback, aligned to Values and behaviours – feed into the formal recognition awards • Continue to drive for increased Staff survey engagement, satisfaction and participation levels through “You said, We did” and other feedback opportunities • Provide Reverse mentoring opportunities within the Service, in particular for senior managers to influence cultural change projects and decisions 	JS CB/NQ JS

Communication	Our communication is swift, open and trusted and has multiple ways to engage with people	1 July 2019-30 June 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Form Cross-team group to review how we communicate Feedback from 'everyone matters' programme to inform group discussion 	CB JS
		1 July 2020-30 June 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explore social media channels for internal and external engagement – linked to Service digital strategy Develop manager toolkit to better equip managers with the skills to communicate brilliantly with their teams 	CB CB
		1 July 2021-30 June 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To develop further in line with Service digital strategy 	CB
Continuous improvement	Our culture is to continually improve our services and underpinning processes It is easy to get things done here	1 July 2019-30 June 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Share the vision – managers briefing session Create success stories to share Recognise good examples of CI in our recognition approaches Start to use the language of CI in our communications Investigate and test Suggestion "box" approaches Map employee lifecycle and identify key touchpoints of frustration for employee or manager Initial 'threshold moments' have been identified as induction and recruitment: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improve quality of Pre-employment and materials – and make values based Review of recruitment processes to improve experience (speed and quality) Reframe our induction – more SLT involvement, punchier and using more push/pull information approach, and welcoming new people to a service we're proud of. 	CB JS JS/NQ CB JS JS JS CB/JS/ NQ JS
		1 July 2020-30 June 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fully implement Suggestions "box" approach 	JS

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognise good examples of CI in our recognition approaches • Highlighting CI as a key ask in our recruitment and development testing • Review and process re-engineer the remaining lifecycle 'points of frustration' to embed slick processes 	JS/NQ CB/JS/NQ JS
		1 July 2021-30 June 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agile and lean methodologies used in our project management approaches • Continue to promote behaviours e.g.: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Keep promises – do what you say you will ○ Be punctual ○ Be outcomes focussed ○ Take accountability 	JS CB
Developing Manager Self Awareness	Our managers are individually accountable for the motivation, management and performance of our people	1 July 2019-30 June 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage self-reflection as part of 1:1 • Offer 360 feedback for talent pipeline as part of development conversations • Range of self-assessment tools made available • 1:1 toolkit and communications • Appraisal toolkit updated ready for annual appraisal meetings 	CB CB CB CB CB
		1 July 2020-30 June 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relaunch coaching and extend offer through Service, to include mixing staff from different backgrounds and groups as a feature of our leadership framework • Drive high-performing teams by developing tools and methodologies to enable performance conversations • Develop and implement tools to identify high performing individuals and nurture for talent pool 	CB CB CB
		1 July 2021-30 June 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Frequent 2-way feedback at all levels to develop a culture of openness, self-awareness, reflection and development 	CB

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify and implement development pathways to managers, focussing on improved teamwork and performance. 	CB
Recognising the benefits of reflecting the diversity of the communities we serve	We have an inclusive workplace that utilises the diverse talents of our workforce to provide a better service	1 July 2019-30 June 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage self-declaration of diversity data on our people systems Manager awareness sessions on getting the best from people including concepts of fairness and equality Awareness raising sessions on a range of inclusion and diversity themes e.g. neurodiversity Run Dignity in our Workplace sessions covering bullying, harassment and discrimination between groups of people Re-promote and continuously develop our Dignity at Work Champions Equality review of our recruitment and progression approaches Inclusion & Diversity delivery group to share and highlight information, utilise Thank you Thursdays and Charity Tuesdays 	NG
				NG
				NG
				NG
				NG
				NG
		1 July 2020-30 June 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consult employee networks on community engagement opportunities and service delivery changes to ensure we make informed decisions and capture a range of views and ideas to maximise opportunities. Implement a programme of holistic community engagement in order to maximise the benefits to the Community and the Service. (e.g. consistently sharing Prevention, protection and recruitment messages when engaging with minority communities) Work alongside station management to ensure station Open Days are able to attract a diverse range of people from the surrounding community 	JS
				JS
				NG

Strong effective leadership and development		1 July 2021-30 June 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recruitment & Talent Pool assessments to include a combination of ECFRS employees and independent assessors from partner agencies or the community to reduce bias. This work-stream will continue to evolve in line with the Inclusion and Diversity Strategic plan 	JS
				NG
	We are considered an exemplar for recognising and developing talent	1 July 2019-30 June 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Scope and re-launch strategic level talent pool in line with revised leadership framework Amend appraisal and talent pool processes to reflect revised leadership framework Re-align external attraction and recruitment approaches to include better utilise social media, Jobcentre Plus, CFOA and NFCC. Implement a best-practice Apprenticeship and Internship programme, with focus on increasing diversity. Create an overarching 2-3 year plan to develop a leadership community that is increasingly diverse and highly engaged. Proactively offer student placements as part of our social connection / external partnerships 	CB/JS/NQ
				CB/JS/NQ
				CB/JS/NQ
				CB/JS/NQ
				CB/JS/NQ
				CB/JS/NQ
		1 July 2020-30 June 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Roll-out full leadership framework package including assessment centres and new appraisal approach Targeted interventions for the 5-10% employees identified as hi-potential employees – ‘fast-tracking’ Explore community-based recruitment routes to reconnect with our social purpose through wider inclusivity One year external secondments offered 	CB/JS/NQ] CB/JS/NQ CB/JS/NQ CB/JS/NQ
		1 July 2021-30 June 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Exploring partnerships for learning and innovation – (in line with collaboration strategy) 	CB/JS/NQ

SUCCESS CRITERIA

When will we know that we have been successful?

Our people will feel that they can respond positively to these engagement statements. We will test this annually via our employee engagement survey, and on a quarterly basis we will run a pulse survey on an individual element of our question set:

1.	Members of Service Leadership team (SLT) provides a clear vision of the overall direction of ECFRS
2.	I feel supported in my role
3.	I am encouraged to suggest new ideas for improvements
4.	People communicate openly here regardless of position or level
5.	I have seen action being taken as a result of the previous staff engagement survey
6.	Morale in my immediate team/watch is generally high
7.	Different parts of the Service work well together
8.	I have the right opportunities to learn and grow at work
9.	My last appraisal meeting was useful in helping me improve how I do my job and show where I'm performing well
10.	I have received the right development to perform my management role well
11.	In the last week, I have received thanks or praise for doing good work
12.	I feel valued and recognised for the work that I do by senior managers

13.	I receive feedback on my work
14..	Senior managers do what they say they are going to do
15.	I have confidence in the future of ECFRS
16.	I trust the Service Leadership Team (SLT)
17.	Bullying, harassment and discrimination are not tolerated at ECFRS
18.	I feel able to make decisions without fear of being blamed if things go wrong
19.	ECFRS promotes a culture of openness and transparency
20.	I feel ECFRS treats people fairly, regardless of ethnic background, gender (including transgender), religion, sexual orientation, disability, pregnancy or age
21.	I am proud to say I work for ECFRS
22.	Working here makes me want to do the best work I can
23.	If asked, I would recommend to friends and family that ECFRS is a good place to work
24.	I care about the future of ECFRS

Culture Update – June 2019

Prepared for Audit Committee

As described in the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioners Fire and Rescue Plan, we are promoting a positive culture and developing a cultural change programme that embeds a positive culture through:

- Values and Behaviours
- Recognition
- Communication
- Continuous improvement
- Developing manager self-awareness
- Recognising the benefits of reflecting the diversity of the communities we serve

In the first six months of 2019, there are a variety of actions that we have taken to promote and embed a kind and positive culture. The update below outlines the activity undertaken, provides some detail and the outcomes of the activity.

Activity	Detail	Outcome
Everyone Matters listening exercise	<p>‘Everyone Matters’ is the listening exercise that seeks to engage with every member of staff.</p> <p>It is intended to improve working lives and offers every employee the opportunity to be heard, to share their thoughts on how we ensure this is the best Service it can be and to talk about their own wellbeing and how we can them to thrive.</p> <p>The feedback and themes from ‘Everyone Matters’ are given to the Service Leadership Team, these inform;</p>	<p>We are mid-way through this programme. To date, Everyone Matters has:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • c.250 people briefed • c.200 people have taken the opportunity of 121 meetings <p>So far, the positive themes are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff enjoy the job itself and are proud to work for the Fire Service • Operational staff like the shift system • Operational appliances, equipment and PPE are good quality and well maintained • Operational staff positive about Chief Fire Officer and Chief Executive • Positive feedback on new SLT members visiting KP departments • People based from KP appreciate the facilities and environment • ‘A day in the life’ seen as positive by both support staff and operational

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Any opportunities to offer support • Any quick wins we can put in place to enhance our working lives • An organisation diagnostic the helps to focus the future • The next part of our strategy with valuing people at its heart - longer term plans to deliver actions that are needed 	<p>staff</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good support for people during difficulties • Positive feedback on the Talent Pool team • Positive feedback regarding Inclusion and Diversity support • Pay team is helpful and explain actions well • Like their immediate teams • Like the flexibility – flexible hours, working from home or stations • Positive about new SLT • Behaviours have improved <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Less ‘us and them’ between support staff and stations (but not universal) ○ Some support staff feel more valued (but not all) <p>The development Themes are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More operational training wanted, particularly refresher training • Operational promotion process: concerns re PQA approach and lack of operational focus • Crewing levels, the impact of riding with crews of 4 • Volume of ‘irrelevant’ emails: mainly about IT system availability which may be system-generated • Ability to find information on the intranet (specific mention of policies and training packs). Acknowledged the intranet is improving but search functionality is still not effective • Wish to have more station visits by managers (Group and Area Managers and SLT); some are not aware that there is a programme of station visits and more ad-hoc visits would be appreciated • Rationale for the size of SLT and the new development posts when SLT size was meant to be reducing (not about the people in the posts) • Technical fire safety – concerns over capacity, resourcing and lengthy training period.
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		<p>We have published a 'you said, we did' action log which acknowledges the feedback received so far and the actions being taken in response to the feedback. This will continue to be published regularly. The exercise is intended to close in October 2019.</p>
Policies	<p>Complaints, Compliments and Whistleblowing Policies</p> <p>Grievance policy</p>	<p>Policies created, consulted on and adopted.</p> <p>Existing policy affirmed by ACAS review in 2016, policy now being reviewed to ensure it fully encompasses our approach to resolution.</p>
Peer Review and Anecdotal feedback	<p>The Peer Review took place in late October 2018. Since then we have been working to action feedback from the Review.</p> <p>The ongoing anecdotal feedback we hear from our people continues to echo some of the positivity around culture that the Peer Review Team describes.</p>	<p>Feedback from Peer Review.</p> <p><i>Staff throughout the organisation are proud of the Service; there is a definite feeling of excitement, but also impatience for the changes to take place. It is essential the SLT begin to progress the changes now to keep the momentum Jo's leadership has brought. Staff are waiting for the new SLT to provide that leadership and direction.</i></p> <p><i>Throughout the visit some of the quotes we heard were:</i></p> <p><i>"The energy in the organisation feels more positive"</i></p> <p><i>"People want the Service to do well and they will respond well to change"</i></p> <p><i>"Jo has made a difference – a real breath of fresh air"</i></p> <p><i>"The Service is a different place now"</i></p> <p><i>"SLT -- recognise that you have a bright future and have the courage to do what's needed"</i></p> <p><i>The vast majority of staff that we spoke to felt that there were real signs of change in the organisation. The appointment of the new Chief Executive/Chief Fire Officer has been widely welcomed. Staff like her style</i></p>

		<p><i>of engagement, feel she listens and trust that she will deliver the changes that are needed.</i></p> <p>This type of feedback continues to be received.</p>
Recruitment	<p>We believe that when our internal and external recruitment processes are open, fair and honest, we attract and retain people with the skills we need.</p> <p>In 2018 and 2019 our whole time firefighter campaigns had a focus on positive action. This is making a difference to our outcomes.</p> <p>Positive action included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Targeted information sessions and taster days • Contact with places of worship with a high ethnic minority attendance • Facebook targeted campaign • Cognisance of diversity within certain postcodes • Attendance at events aimed at under-represented groups <p>We are aware of the potential for bias in recruitment and, as a result, ensure that all of our 48 assessors</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Women entering firefighting roles in 2018 – 10.2% of our new 2018 entrants • Women entering firefighting roles in 2019 – we are mid-way through our campaign but early statistics suggest that female new entrants will increase • Firefighters from an ethnic minority background increased from 2011 to 2018 from 1.6%-2.1% of all firefighters • 8% of all new joiners in 2018 were from an ethnic minority background. <p>Analysis of 2018 statistics has helped to inform the type of action we undertake in 2019. For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In 2018, our website received 10,633 visits from 9,241 visitors. 86% of females that visited our website went on to start applying for a role with us. • Female only targeted campaigns were use; our “Attitude” creative outperformed the “Fitness” message, driving 509 clicks. • On Twitter videos were the most effective media and Twitter was most effective at reaching an interested audience of any channel. • Overall females performed better than their male applicants at both the PQA application stage and Interview stage whilst males performed better during the Physical assessments. Both genders performed almost equally across the online tests. • Females didn’t perform as well on the Bleep Test and Ladder Lift whereas males didn’t perform well with Manual Dexterity assessment.

	have had unconscious bias training.	These insights helped us to plan our 2019 positive action.
Inclusion and Diversity Delivery Group	<p>A Delivery group has responsibility for delivery of the Inclusion and Diversity Action Plan working with Heads of Departments to deliver actions.</p> <p>The meeting agenda covers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Concerns and Celebrations from all reps • Equality Objectives KPI updates • National and Regional updates • Upcoming Events and Awareness Dates • Policy & Guidance changes • Equality Impact Risks Learning and Development opportunities • HMICFRS • IRMP & Fire & Rescue Plan 	<p>The Delivery Group, chaired by our Chief Fire Officer and Chief Executive, has begun to meet and to work together.</p> <p>It will, once fully recruited to, have representation from the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Women's Forum • Dignity at Work Champions • Being • AFSA • Multi-faith Group (Including Chaplaincy) • Neurodiversity rep (lived experience) • Rep Bodies Equality reps • Parents & Carers Network once established (Sept 2019) • Disability Network once established (Sept 2019)
Employee Support Groups	<p>A range of support groups are already in place (as referenced above). The need for several new groups has been made clear, these are in the process of being formed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents & Carers Network once established (Sept 2019) 	Members for the new groups are beginning to come forward. Existing groups are active and embedded.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Disability Network once established (Sept 2019) 	
HMICFRS	<p>Nationally we are keeping pace with feedback from the inspectorate. We have reviewed the tranche 1 and tranche 2 reports and have taken particular note of the 'people pillar' feedback.</p> <p>We notice that the tranche 2 feedback around the 'people pillar' of inspection reflects a greater range of good practice – we are committed to accessing this good practice and to sharing our own good practice with others.</p> <p>We have prepared for our own inspection.</p>	<p>Strategic Briefing to inspectorate delivered on 24th June 2019. Fieldwork taking place in the week commencing 1 July 2019 and the hot debrief taking place thereafter.</p> <p>Ahead of inspection we have taken time to identify areas of work that we believe are good practice and the areas where we have more to do to reach good practice.</p> <p>Our focus, challenge and opportunities at the moment are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Operational training – We have to 'do the basics brilliantly' to keep the public and our fire fighters safe and we know that we have a job of work to do to get our operational training where we want it to be. We have seen the positive impact that high quality, targeted training such as the new style casualty care training, has on our people feeling valued. We understand the challenges, have made a significant financial investment and own training as an organisational priority for SLT. On Call – The majority of fire cover across Essex is provided by on call firefighters so they are a high priority in keeping the people of Essex safe. It is essential that we match and honour the commitment of on call firefighters in doing all we can to value and support them. We made a significant financial investment in our on call development programme. ICT, data and systems - We know that some of our systems are not good enough and do not support our people to do their work. We recognise that there is an opportunity for improved efficiency and connectivity. Delivering data and systems improvements is now a major

		<p>focus of our efficiency and innovation agenda and carries the aim that ‘the leading edge’ nationwide will be here in Essex</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Culture Change – Most of our revenue budget is on staffing. That means we are a business that depends on its people and we have to operate like one. <p>Stakeholder and anecdotal feedback tells us that it is beginning to look different and feel better for our staff. But for there to be real change, that is resilient and sustainable, to fundamentally change our narrative, we have to think differently about ourselves as well as people thinking differently about us and we can only do that with and through our people.</p>
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There is, of course, more to do. We are excited about this – we know where we are going and are committed to getting there.



Information Governance

POLICY – Comments, Compliments & Complaints

Number: 002

Last Updated: 01.07.2019
Next Review Date: 01.07.2020

1.0 Summary of Changes

Existing policy transferred to new template and updated.

2.0 What this Policy is About?

Essex Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner Fire and Rescue Authority (the Authority) is an evolving establishment committed to delivering a quality service at all times, sometimes in the most traumatic circumstances.

The purpose of the Comments, Compliments and Complaints Policy is to set out the approach by which the Authority seeks to deal with any feedback made to it, the investigation process and the service anyone giving feedback can expect to receive. Our customers are to be assured that when providing feedback they will be treated in a fair, reasonable and consistent manner.

Feedback gives an indication of how well the service is performing in the public domain and where improvements can be made to training, procedures, policy and promoting changes. Feedback also gives the opportunity to reward those staff that exceed expectations of the people they meet. Compliments received about the service are shared within the Service via our Corporate Communications team who share this on our facility called “#ThankYouThursday”. When things go wrong, we need to deal with what happened quickly and in a way that is constructive and supportive.

This policy applies to all staff, volunteers and contractors working for or on behalf of the Authority.

Comment, compliments and complaints are collectively referred to as feedback.

3.0 Statement of Policy

The Authority's policy is to ensure that feedback is dealt with fairly and appropriately – this includes sharing insightful commentary and learning widely. It is our intention to be courteous and acknowledge feedback and also provide written outcome responses whenever appropriate. The Authority is committed to transparency. Analysis of feedback received will be reported to the Performance and Resource Board in a publicly-available monthly report. Feedback is used to implement ways of improving the Authority's services or the manner in which these services are delivered.

The Policy aims to fulfil the following objectives:-

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- a. Members of the public are made aware of their right to give feedback and of the procedure for doing so;
- b. Members of the public feel that feedback is being treated confidentially, fairly and seriously, regardless of whether the outcome brings complete satisfaction;
- c. Staff, volunteers and contractors are aware of this policy and how best to deal with feedback;
- d. The Authority responds to feedback in a timely, courteous and efficient manner
- e. Members of the public are aware of this policy and how best to deal with feedback;
- f. The Authority learns from feedback and takes measures to improve service where appropriate
- g. The reputation of the Authority when delivering services to those most in need is maintained.

Comments

Comments are queries or statements about a particular activity or circumstances that do not raise a complaint. This could be a question about how or why the Authority is doing something, or it could be a suggestion of how it could do something differently. Any such enquiry or comment will be noted (logged), shared with relevant parties and a response provided where appropriate. The Service will triage comments and identify any that need to be processed as Freedom of Information Requests, Environmental Information Requests or Subject Access Requests and will be process and log them accordingly.

Compliments

Compliments are an expression of praise or satisfaction received by the Authority for work or actions undertaken by individuals in the employ of the Authority or provided by the Service for the Authority.

Complaints

Complaints are an expression of discontent or dissatisfaction affecting any member of the public, groups of individuals or an organisation regarding the standard of service, actions or lack of action by the Authority or by its staff.

Approach to Procedure

The procedure for processing feedback is described in the comments, compliments and complaints procedure.



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Classification of Complaints

Any complaints made to the Authority are covered by this policy, including complaints relating to actions taken at operational incidents, actions relating to cases of adult or child safeguarding, or actions taken in relation to the Data Protection Act 2018. In the case of allegations about Safeguarding and Data Protection, the way of handling these is different. They will only be handled by Officers who have received additional, specialised training.

This policy would not normally apply to challenges or objections concerning the enforcement of safety regulations, such as the issuing of an enforcement notice or activity occurring from an audit of a business premises, or subsequent failure to comply with legislation. In these circumstances, the complainant will be directed to the appeals process outlined in the relevant legislation. However, feedback about the conduct or behaviour of staff undertaking these actions does fall within the scope of this policy.

Where a complaint relates to a member of staff, following investigation of the complaint it may also be necessary to consider the nature of the feedback under the Authority's Grievance and Disciplinary Policy and/or Code of Conduct.

Complaints relating to the Chief Fire Officer and Principle Officers

Complaints against the Chief Fire Officer and Principle Officers can be submitted by any member of the public and staff. If the complaint is related to an internal grievance matter then this will be dealt with through the grievance policy.

All allegations or complaints against the Chief Fire Officer and Principle Officers will be managed, investigated and concluded by the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner Fire and Rescue Authority or its representative. Complaints should be set out in writing and emailed to the PFCC@Essex.pnn.police.uk

Complaints against the Chief Fire Officer and Principle Officers which are received by Essex County Fire and Rescue Service should be forwarded onto the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner Fire and Rescue Authority as soon as practical and within 2 working days.



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Complaints against the Chief Fire Officer and Principle Officers may cover three areas:

Professional conduct

Any accusation in this area will be considered against the Seven Principles of Public Life (Nolan Principles) and Essex County Fire and Rescue Service's Values.

Direction and control of the service

Any accusation in this area will be considered against what can reasonably be considered the Chief Officers responsibility for the direction and control of the service. This may include delivery against the responsibilities delegated to them from the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner as set out in the Essex Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner Fire and Rescue Authority Constitution.

Criminal accusation

These will be dealt with by the Police.

Complaints relating to the Police Fire and Crime Commissioner and Deputy Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner

If you wish to make an allegation or complaint that the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner or the Deputy Police Fire and Crime Commissioner has failed to comply with the PFCC's Code of Conduct, that allegation must be put in writing to the Police, Fire and Crime Panel, Essex County Council, County Hall, Market Road, Chelmsford, Essex, CM1 1QH. The Panel will consider the complaint and, where appropriate, form a subgroup to consider the complaint and agree a resolution.

Complaints relating to the Monitoring Officer

Where a member of the public wishes to make an allegation or complaint against the Monitoring Officer of the Authority this should be sent to the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner who will consider the complaint. Complaints should be set out in writing and emailed to PFCC@Essex.pnn.police.uk.

Unreasonable or persistent contact

The Authority is committed to dealing with complaints fairly and impartially. As part of this service they do not normally limit the contact complainants have with the Service. However, there are a small number of complainants, who, because of the frequency of their contact or persistent nature of the contact with the Authority, we refer to as 'unreasonably persistent complainants'. In these exceptional circumstances we will take action to limit their contact with our Service.



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The decision to restrict access to our Service will be taken at Assistant Chief Fire Officer/Director level and will normally follow prior warning to the complainant. Any restrictions imposed will be appropriate and proportionate. The options we are most likely to consider are:

- Requesting contact in a particular form (for example, letters only)
- Requiring contact to take place with a named Officer
- Restricting telephone calls to specified days and times; and / or
- Asking the complainant to enter into an agreement about their future contacts with us.

In all cases where the Service decides to treat someone as an 'unreasonably persistent complainant', we will write to tell the complainant why we believe his or her behaviour falls in to this category, what action we are taking and the duration of that action.

Unreasonable Complainant Behaviour

The Authority has a duty to ensure the safety and welfare of their staff. We do not expect our staff to tolerate behaviour by complainants, which is unacceptable, abusive, offensive or threatening. We will take action to protect staff from that behaviour by:-

- Restricting the access the unreasonable complainant has with the Service. The decision to restrict access to our Service will be taken at Assistant Chief Fire Officer/Director level.
- Requesting contact in a particular form (for example, letters only)
- Requiring contact to take place with a named Officer
- Restricting telephone calls to specified days and times; and / or
- Asking the complainant to enter into an agreement about their conduct

Where the behaviour is so extreme that the Authority considers it to threaten the immediate safety and welfare of our staff, further options will be considered, for example reporting the matter to the police or exploring legal action. In such cases, we may not give the complainant warning of that action.

4.0 Implications of the Policy

4.1 Finance / Staffing / Training / Other



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Complaints handling and investigation training will be made available through the Learning and Development team.

4.2 Risk Assessment(s)

There is no specific risk assessment or health and safety consideration considered relevant to the content of this policy.

4.3 Equality Impact Assessment

This policy has been subject to an Equality Impact Assessment and has been graded as having a low potential impact. The assessment concluded that the proposals in this policy would have no potential or actual differential impact on grounds of race, ethnicity, nationality, gender, transgender, disability, age, religion or belief or sexual orientation.

5.0 Consultation

The following have been consulted during the formulation of this document:

- *Service Leadership Team*
- *Representative Bodies*
- *Inclusion Lead*
- *Office of Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner*

6.0 Monitoring and Review

Performance Monitoring

The Service Leadership Team and the Authority (via Performance and Resource Board) shall receive an overview of feedback through the monthly and quarterly performance reports and an annual report on feedback from the public to ensure any weaknesses or trends are identified.

The Authority will record the level of feedback and the number of appeals during each financial year and the outcomes from each. It will not record sensitive personal data, such as age or ethnicity. Whilst best practise would suggest this should be collected, the very low level of feedback means that no meaningful analysis of the data could be made, and the data is therefore not required. This position will be subject to review.



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The Authority will on occasions dip sample and review cases for the purposes of scrutiny and compliance.

The Authority will maintain a database of all feedback. Records shall be kept for the duration of three years in accordance with the Authority's Retention Schedule.

Policy Review

The Performance and Data Department will formally review this policy and associated procedure on a yearly basis from the date of publication, to consider:

- Its effectiveness in the business area concerned;
- Any changes to legislation;
- Challenges to the procedure;
- Any identified concerns in relation to implementation

7.0 Related Service Policies or Related Procedures

Comments, Compliments and Complaints Procedure.
Grievance and Disciplinary Policy
Whistleblowing Policy
Whistleblowing Procedure

8.0 Other Source Documents, e.g. Legislation, Partnership Agreements (if applicable)

Relevant Legislation

Care Act 2014
Children's Act 1989
Data Protection Act 2018
General Data Protection Regulations 2016

Policy Author: Tracy King, Assistant Director Performance and Data.

Policy Owner: Rick Hylton, Deputy Chief Fire Officer

Cancellations: Compliments and Complaints Policy March 2011.



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POLICY – Comments, Compliments & Complaints

Number: 002

Last Updated: 01.07.2019
Next Review Date: 01.07.2020

Title	POLICY – Comments, Compliments & Complaints
Author/Owner	Tracy King/Rick Hylton
Status	Approved
Version	1.0
Date Approved	5 June 2019
Approved by	Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner Fire and Rescue Authority
Review Date	01.07.2020
Security Classification	OFFICIAL



Information Governance

Speak Up, Speak Out

Title	Speak Up, Speak Out
Author/Owner	Tracy King
Status	Approved
Version	1.0
Date Approved	5 June 2019
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Introduction

Essex Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner Fire and Rescue Authority (the Authority) want to hear about your experiences of our services. Comments, compliments and Complaints (commonly collectively known as feedback) are all learning opportunities for the Authority and can help us improve the services we provide to all customers.

This guidance is aimed at anyone who is considering providing feedback relating to the services we provide. We urge all users of this document to consider an informal route to resolution. You may be dissatisfied with the outcome of the informal route in which case exercising your right to complain is the appropriate next step.

Your feedback is important to us. When you are pleased with our services we would like you to tell us so we know what is working well for you. Where expectations have not been met or where our Service has been below published standards your feedback is key to help us improve, help us to put it right and improve our service. If you are making a complaint on behalf of someone else, we need their signed consent that they have agreed to this.

When considering comments, compliments and complaints about our service we try to be:

- Helpful and accessible
- Clear, timely and thorough
- Positive, improving and learning lessons for the future

How can you submit a comment, compliments or complaint?

You can tell us your views in the following way:

- Use our online form <http://www.essex-fire.gov.uk/contact/>
- Telephone: 01376 576299
- Email: informationgovernance@essex-fire.gov.uk
- Post: Performance & Data Department
Kelvedon Park
Rivenhall, WITHAM
CM8 3HB

Compliments

What is a compliment?

A Compliment is an expression of praise or satisfaction with the service provided by the Authority or its employees in the course of their duties.

What happens when I compliment you?

- You will receive an acknowledgement that we are in receipt of your compliment.
- We will review and look into what you have told us and understand what has worked well.
- We will learn lessons from the compliment and share best practise across the Authority
- We will praise and give credit to our staff whom the compliment relates to.

Complaints

What is a complaint?

A complaint is an expression of discontent or dissatisfaction regarding the standard of service, actions or lack of action by the Authority or by its staff when acting in the course of their duties.

Examples of this could be:

- Delay or failure to provide a service
- Dissatisfaction with our policies
- Failure to provide adequate standards of service
- Failure to fulfil statutory responsibilities
- An employee's attitude or behaviour
- Lack of customer service
- Dissatisfaction or concerns with the way we handle your personal information

What is not a complaint?

- Informal, day-to-day matters that can easily be resolved
- A request for service
- A request for information or explanation of policy or procedures
- Making an appeal following a decision about procedure or policy i.e. internal review following a Freedom of Information request response

What happens when I complain to you?

We will review your complaint to determine if it falls within one of the following complaint types:

- Corporate Complaint
- Safeguarding Complaint
- Data Protection Complaint

Corporate Complaints

- We will acknowledge receipt of your complaint.
- We will investigate what you have told us and respond to you within 20 working days.

- If we cannot respond to you within 20 days we will let you know and explain why.
- We will take your complaint seriously and make sure you receive a fair and full response
- We will put things right for you if we can and learn from any mistakes to make improvements to our services.
- We will advise you if your complaint is about another body acting on our behalf.
- We will let you know if we agree with part or all of your complaint, apologising and considering appropriate actions to provide a remedy for any service failure.
- We will explain the reasons why if we do not agree with your view of our services. We hope this will assist you to understand matters better, even if some of your concerns remain.
- We will regularly review the lessons learnt from considering complaints so that we can improve the quality of our service. In this way, the outcome of our consideration of your complaint may help improve the experience of others that use our services.

Complaints relating to the Chief Fire Officer and Principle Officers

Complaints against the Chief Fire Officer and Principle Officers can be submitted by any member of the public and staff. If the complaint is related to an internal grievance matter then this will be dealt with through the grievance policy.

All allegations or complaints against the Chief Fire Officer and Principle Officers will be managed, investigated and concluded by the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner Fire and Rescue Authority or its representative. Complaints should be set out in writing and emailed to the PFCC@Essex.pnn.police.uk

Complaints against the Chief Fire Officer and Principle Officers which are received by Essex County Fire and Rescue Service should be forwarded onto the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner Fire and Rescue Authority as soon as practical and within 2 working days.

Complaints against the Chief Fire Officer and Principle Officers may cover three areas:

Professional conduct

Any accusation in this area will be considered against the Seven Principles of Public Life (Nolan Principles) and Essex County Fire and Rescue Service's Values.

Direction and control of the service

Any accusation in this area will be considered against what can reasonably be considered the Chief Officers responsibility for the direction and control of the service. This may include delivery against the responsibilities delegated to them from the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner as set out in the Essex Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner Fire and Rescue Authority Constitution.

Criminal accusation

These will be dealt with by the Police.

Complaints relating to the Police Fire and Crime Commissioner and Deputy Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner

If you wish to make an allegation or complaint that the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner or the Deputy Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner has failed to comply with the PFCC's Code of Conduct, that allegation must be put in writing to the Police, Fire and Crime Panel, Essex County Council, County Hall, Market Road, Chelmsford, Essex, CM1 1QH. The Panel will consider the complaint and, where appropriate, form a subgroup to consider the complaint and agree a resolution.

Complaints relating to the Monitoring Officer

Where a member of the public wishes to make an allegation or complaint against the Monitoring Officer of the Authority this should be sent to the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner who will consider the complaint. Complaints should be set out in writing and emailed to PFCC@Essex.pnn.police.uk.

Data Protection Complaints

The way we deal with complaints relating to how we handle your personal information are determined by legislation and will be reviewed and responded to by the Authority's Data Protection Officer (DPO). Complaints of this nature will be dealt with within 10 working days.

For Data Protection complaints contact the Data Protection Officer via email: dpo@essex-fire.gov.uk.

Safeguarding Complaints

Safeguarding complaints should be passed directly to the Community Development and Safeguarding Manager for ECFRS via Vulnerable.Adults@essex-fire.gov.uk.

The Community Development and Safeguarding Manager, on receipt of the written complaint or verbal account of the complaint, will then liaise with the Safeguarding Responsible Person.

The Community Development and Safeguarding Manager and Responsible Person will decide whether to liaise with another agency, e.g. Police or social care services, or Local Authority Designated Officer or whether there is an internal case required.

Complaints about other organisations

If your complaint concerns other organisations such as the Police or Ambulance Service or an independent service provider, we will forward it to the relevant organisation with your consent. If your complaint involves the Authority and another body there will be full co-operation and co-ordination to resolve your complaint to ensure you receive a co-ordinated response.

Confidentiality

We will maintain the confidentiality of all personal information and not disclose it outside the Authority without your permission unless we are legally obliged to do so. However, if we are informed of anything that makes us think that an individual is unsafe or at risk of being harmed, we will pass this on to the appropriate authority or service for action.

Unreasonably persistent behaviour

The Authority is committed to dealing with complaints fairly and impartially. As part of this service they do not normally limit the contact complainants have with the Service.

However, there are a small number of complainants, who, because of the frequency of their contact with the Authority, we refer to as 'unreasonably persistent complainants'. In these exceptional circumstances we will take action to limit their contact with our Service.

The decision to restrict access to our Service will be taken at Assistant Chief Fire Officer/Director level and will normally follow prior warning to the complainant. Any restrictions imposed will be appropriate and proportionate. The options we are most likely to consider are:

- Requesting contact in a particular form (for example, letters only)
- Requiring contact to take place with a named Officer
- Restricting telephone calls to specified days and times; and / or
- Asking the complainant to enter into an agreement about their future contacts with us.

In all cases where the Service decides to treat someone as an 'unreasonably persistent complainant', we will write to tell the complainant why we believe his or her behaviour falls in to this category, what action we are taking and the duration of that action.

Unreasonable Complainant Behaviour

The Authority has a duty to ensure the safety and welfare of its staff. We do not expect our staff to tolerate behaviour by complainants, which is unacceptable, abusive, offensive or threatening. We will take action to protect staff from that behaviour by:-

- Restricting the access the unreasonable complainant has with the Service. The decision to restrict access to our Service will be taken at Assistant Chief Fire Officer/Director level.
- Requesting contact in a particular form (for example, letters only)
- Requiring contact to take place with a named Officer
- Restricting telephone calls to specified days and times; and / or
- Asking the complainant to enter into an agreement about their conduct

Where the behaviour is so extreme that the Authority considers it to threaten the immediate safety and welfare of our staff, further options will be considered, for example reporting the matter to the police or exploring legal action. In such cases, we may not give the complainant warning of that action.

What if I disagree with your response to my complaint?

If you are dissatisfied with the outcome of our investigation into your corporate complaint, you have the right to appeal. Within 20 days of receipt of the complaint outcome letter please set out the grounds of your appeal and submit them in one of the following ways:-

- Email: informationgovernance@essex-fire.gov.uk
- Post: Performance & Data Department
Kelvedon Park
Rivenhall, WITHAM
CM8 3HB

Alternatively, you can complain to the Local Government Ombudsman at

Website www.lgo.org.uk:

Local Government Ombudsman

PO Box 4471

Coventry

CV4 0EH

Telephone: 0300 061 0614

Email: enquiries@lgo.org.uk

Whistleblowing

Whistleblowing is commonly understood as raising concerns about misconduct within an organisation or within an independent structure associated with it. It is important for members of the public and members of staff to understand that proof is not required. It doesn't matter if the concern is latterly judged unfounded providing that the whistleblower is genuinely troubled by the event in question at the time.

Concerns that can be raised include but are not limited to:-

Unsafe working practises/conditions

Impropriety

Breach of procedure or policy

Neglect of duty

Breach of acceptable standards of ethical/professional conduct

A criminal offence

Suspicion of fraud

A bullying culture (across a team or organisation rather than an individual instance which should be managed against the Bullying and Harassment Policy)

Inadequate training or induction for staff

Deliberate concealment of information in relation to any of the above.

If you suspect an instance of malpractice you will need to exercise judgement before bringing the situation to light. If the inaction or lapse of standards seems to be minor, then it may be sufficient to bring the matter to the attention of the person who appears to be at fault.

There are a number of options available to raise a whistleblowing concern through:-

Pippa Brent-Isherwood, Chief Executive and Monitoring Officer

Office of the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner for Essex, Kelvedon Park, London Road, Rivenhall, Witham, CM8 3HB

Email: Pippa.Brent-Isherwood@essex.pnn.police.uk

Telephone: 01245 291613

or

Protect (formerly Public concern at Work) 020 3117 2520 or email whistle@protect-advice.org.uk

Protect is an independent charity that provide free confidential advice on how to raise a concern about serious malpractice at work. Protect are also contracted to provide an independent whistleblowing service for Essex County Fire and Rescue Service.

or

The Government make available a list of prescribed bodies that whistleblowing concerns can be raised with if you chose not to raise the concern with your employer, the full list can be seen here [list of prescribed people and bodies](#) .

The advice following the closure of the Audit Commission is disclosures relating to local authorities can be made to the external auditor of the relevant authority.

To ascertain details of a Local Authorities external auditors the whistleblower would need to contact the Local Authority or Public Sector Audit Appointments Limited (PSAA). It should be noted that PSAA is not a prescribed person under the Public Interest Disclosure Act and their role in this is only to signpost individuals to external auditor appointed to the local authority in question.

GRIEVANCE POLICY

About

This policy sets out to confirm the approach the Service will take should an employee's have a concern, issue or grievance about their employment, and to protect employee's wellbeing within the workplace.

This policy sets out to promote positive behaviour, a positive culture and set out behavioural expectations with the objective to prevent failures in expectations.

The Senior Managers of the Service are fully committed to this policy.

Grievance Policy

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GRIEVANCE POLICY

1. POLICY STATEMENT

- 1.1 Essex County Fire and Rescue Service (the Service) is committed to creating an environment in which employees are treated fairly and with dignity and respect.
- 1.2 The Grievance Policy includes the Service's Dignity at Work Framework. All complaints in relation to the individual rights in employment (other than those detailed in 1.7 below), including complaints of harassment and bullying, are to be addressed through this procedure. Any bullying or harassment of employees is totally unacceptable and will not be tolerated.
- 1.3 The purpose of this policy is to promote the highest standards of professional behaviour among staff and to provide a platform to raise a concern, issue or grievance about their employment, and to protect employee's wellbeing within the workplace.
- 1.4 The individual grievance procedure is intended to cover the range of concerns, problems and issues which individuals may raise with their employer. It fulfils the statutory requirements, which are set out in the annexes to the ACAS Code of Practice on Grievance and Disciplinary Procedures.
- 1.5 It is the policy of the Service that all grievances raised by employees are dealt with in a fair and effective manner, and at the appropriate level bearing in mind the nature of the complaint.
- 1.6 It is expected that most questions concerning an employee's employment with the Service will be dealt with satisfactorily in the course of the normal working relationship between the employee concerned and the immediate line manager.

Grievance Policy

- 1.7 Matters appropriately dealt with under this procedure include all questions relating to the individual rights of employees concerning their employment, other than those relating to grading, discipline, capability or appraisal or any other policy or process which has a separate appeals procedure.
- 1.8 The procedures detailed in this policy should not be used for any matter relating to nationally or locally agreed terms and conditions of service, except where the grievance relates to the interpretation or application of a particular provision to an individual employee.
- 1.9 This procedure should also not be used relating to matters which the Authority has no control e.g. income tax, national insurance or pay awards.
- 1.10 Employees are encouraged to consider mediation as an option to resolve a complaint or dispute. Some situations may, however, be more serious and may need to be dealt with under the formal procedure outlined within this policy.
- 1.11 The Service is committed to resolving issues of conduct and behaviour promptly and appropriately and encourages the use of de-escalation and informal resolution where possible

2. SCOPE

- 2.1 This policy applies to all employees of the Essex Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner Fire and Rescue Authority (the “Service”), including those on a Fixed Term Contracts, Casual Contracts, Full and Part-time employees and employees with flexible working agreements.

Grievance Policy

- 2.2 This policy does not apply to Agency Workers, Self-Employed Contractors, volunteers, members of the Public, or Third Party Service Providers, who should use the Complaints procedure.
- 2.3 Should a grievance be made against a decision taken by Service Leadership Team or the Deputy Chief Fire Officer, the grievance will be heard by the Chief Fire Officer with appeals to the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner.
- 2.4 Should a grievance be raised against the Chief Fire Officer, or against a decision taken by the Chief Fire Officer, the grievance will be heard by an appropriate person as appointed at the Monitoring Officer (PFCC)'s discretion, with appeals to the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner.
- 2.5 Should a member of the Service Leadership Team wish to raise a grievance, they should do so in accordance with the procedure set out within the terms and conditions of their employment.
- 2.5 Complaints that amount to an allegation of misconduct on the part of another colleague will be investigated and dealt with under the Disciplinary Policy.
- 2.6 Collective grievances will be dealt with via the collective grievance procedure, which follows the same principles as for an individual grievance, with one joint grievance and appeal.
- 2.7 Unless there are exceptional circumstances any grievance must be raised within three months of the incident or action giving rise to it. Any grievance raised outside of that time may not be considered.

3. PRINCIPLES

- 3.1 The Service will treat all grievances as being raised in good faith, and is committed to ensuring a fair investigation process.

Grievance Policy

- 3.2 Every attempt will be made to resolve grievances at the informal level, and as near as possible to their point of origin to ensure grievances are dealt with as quickly as possible, and without undue delay.
- 3.3 Employees have the right to be accompanied by a fellow employee or trade union official of their choice at all formal stages of the procedure. No reasonable request for representation, or to be accompanied by a companion, would be refused at the informal stages of the procedure
- 3.4 Should a grievance be found to be not raised in good faith, then the individual raising the grievance may be subject to further management action. In such instances, the Disciplinary Policy may apply.

4. PROCEDURE

Informal Stage

- 4.1 The Service is committed to resolving issues informally wherever it is possible to do so. Employees should aim to resolve most grievances quickly and informally by discussing them with their line manager. Where the grievance is a complaint against the line manager with whom the grievance would normally be raised, the employee can approach that person's manager or another manager at the same or similar level of authority. If employees are not satisfied with the outcome of this initial informal stage, they may move to formal stage.
- 4.2 Employees are expected to attempt to resolve their concerns informally with their line manager in the first instance before raising a formal grievance. Facilitated conversations or informal mediation, or similar methods, may be an option.

Grievance Policy

- 4.3 Managers will meet with the employee as soon as possible, and will aim to do so within seven calendar days of the grievance being raised, to listen to the employee's concerns, and to establish the facts surrounding the issue and, where possible, to resolve the issue.
- 4.4 Having considered the issue, the manager must speak to the employee regarding their findings and any decisions as soon as reasonably possible, and will aim to hold the follow up meeting within seven calendar days of the initial informal stage grievance meeting. The manager will confirm the discussion in writing as soon as reasonably practicable, and will aim to do so within seven calendar days.
- 4.5 In most cases, this open dialogue between employee, manager and, if appropriate, any third parties, should be able to resolve or explain the issue.
- 4.6 If the concern or complaint is against their line manager, it may be more appropriate for the employee to discuss the issue with the line manager's manager, or another manager at the same or similar level of authority, who will try and resolve the issue at the informal stage.
- 4.7 At the end of the informal stage, the manager will inform the employee of the outcome explaining how the procedure can be progressed if they remain dissatisfied.
- 4.8 If the concern or complaint is considered to be of a more serious nature, it may be appropriate to move directly to the formal procedure.

Formal Stage

- 4.9 If the employee is not satisfied with the outcomes shared by the manager, and have explored all other avenues to resolve their grievance informally, or if the

Grievance Policy

grievance is of a more serious, or exceptional, nature, they can raise a formal grievance.

- 4.10 If a grievance cannot be settled informally, it should then be raised formally in writing with the appropriate level of management. Normally, this will be the line manager. Again, where the grievance is a complaint against the line manager with whom the grievance would normally be raised, the employee can approach that person's manager or another manager at the same or similar level of authority.
- 4.11 Managers will meet with the employee as soon as possible, and will aim to do so within seven calendar days of receipt of the written notification. Employees have a right to be accompanied by a trade union representative or to have a fellow worker as a companion. It is important that the meeting is not interrupted and that the employee feels their grievance is being treated seriously and in confidence. If an employee's representative cannot attend on a proposed date, the employee can suggest another date so long as it is reasonable and is not more than seven calendar days after the date originally proposed by the manager. This seven-day time limit may be extended by mutual agreement. The employee will be given a full opportunity to explain their complaint and say how they think it should be settled. If a point is reached in the meeting where it is not clear how to deal with the grievance or further investigations are necessary the meeting should be adjourned to get advice or make further investigations. The manager should give the grievance careful consideration before responding.
- 4.12 At the formal stage, the manager may invite an appropriate member of the Human Resources team who has not previously been involved with the case to the grievance meeting as an adviser. A note taker may also be present.
- 4.13 In some circumstances it may not be possible to resolve the grievance at the meeting (e.g. because further information, or an investigation, is required). If the Manager or the employee consider that a further or separate investigation

Grievance Policy

is required, a reasonable timescale should be agreed with affected employee to allow further investigation.

- 4.14 In certain circumstances, such as when legislation needs to be complied with (e.g. Data Protection Act 2018), or where commercially sensitive information is involved, it may not be possible for such information to be shared.
- 4.15 In carrying out any investigation, the investigating officer will:-
- establish the facts of the case and gather evidence;
 - interview the employee where appropriate and any relevant witnesses;
 - ensure individuals being interviewed are aware of the purpose of the investigation.
- 4.16 Having considered the issue, the manager must arrange a meeting within previously agreed timescales to inform the employee of the outcome. This outcome should be confirmed to the employee in writing in seven calendar days of the meeting. A copy of the written outcome will be kept on the employees Personal Record file (PRF).
- 4.17 The hearing manager's final response to the grievance will be either:
- To uphold (in whole or part) the grievance; or
 - To dismiss the grievance
- 4.18 Notes of the meeting should be taken, and, where possible, agreed and signed at the meeting, and the employee should be provided with a copy and the opportunity to comment on the notes taken within seven calendar days (unless otherwise agreed). Should the notes not be agreed, then the complainant's comments can be attached as an appendix to the original notes.

Grievance Policy

- 4.19 Every effort should be made to hear grievances as quickly as possible. If it is not possible to meet any of the timescales outlined above, the employee should be informed of the reason and a revised timescale agreed with them.

Appeal Procedure

- 4.20 If the employee informs their manager in good time and in writing that they are unhappy with the decision after the formal grievance hearing, the manager should arrange for an appeal hearing to be conducted in good time. The appeal will be to a manager at a more senior role who has the practical authority to review and change the original decision. This level of authority may depend on the nature of the decision e.g. whether it simply involved application of existing policy, or was a decision introducing or changing policy. The employee should be given a written decision and explanation on their appeal within seven calendar days.
- 4.21 Serious cases such as allegations of bullying, harassment, racism or other unlawful discrimination which suggest major problems, for example of culture or management style, will (where the matter remains unresolved) require a further hearing to be conducted by the corporate level of the employing authority which is appropriate to the issue. For example, the appropriate level will be that which both appreciates the wider importance and significance of the issue and has the authority to deal with it. As with the previous stage, the employee should be given a written decision and explanation on their appeal within seven calendar days.
- 4.22 The employee must set out the grounds for the appeal and any redress being sought. The employee is required to outline whether their dissatisfaction with the outcome relates to:
- The decision – the evidence did not support the conclusion of the manager

Grievance Policy

- The procedure – a failure to follow procedure had a material effect on the decision
- The proposed action to resolve the grievance
- The outcome being sought.

4.23 A Senior Manager (Group Manager, or equivalent, or above) shall hear the grievance appeal, and will aim to do so within ten days of receipt of the appeal from the employee. Should the Senior Manager request support at a grievance appeal meeting from a Human Resources practitioner, the member of Human Resources should be someone who has not previously been involved in the case.

4.24 The employee will be invited to attend the meeting to put forward their grievance. Employees have a right to be accompanied by a trade union representative or to have a fellow worker as a companion.

4.25 Where possible, the manager shall notify the employee of their decision in person on the date of the appeal meeting and confirm this in writing within seven calendar days of the appeal hearing. A copy of the written outcome will be kept on the employee's Personal Record file (PRF).

4.26 The appeal hearing manager may substitute a different decision to the original Grievance outcome and may decide to:

- To uphold (in whole or part) the grievance; or
- To dismiss the grievance

4.27 A record of the meeting agreed by both parties (where agreement is possible) should be kept.

4.28 Every effort should be made to hear grievances as quickly as possible. If it is not possible to meet any of the timescales outlined above, the employee should be informed of the reason and a revised timescale agreed with them.

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4.29 The decision of the appeal hearing is final.

5. FURTHER MATTERS

5.1 Supportive mechanisms available for employees who raise a grievance are:

- Mediation
- Free Counselling Services
- Employee Assistance Programme (EAP)
- Occupational Health (OH)
- Professional association, or union, if you are a member.
- Mental Health / Wellbeing champions
- Human Resources

5.2 The Service will make a decision on a case-by-case basis as to whether the proposed action that has caused the grievance should be implemented or delayed until the grievance has been resolved, or all stages of the grievance procedure have been exhausted whichever is the sooner, where maintaining the status quo would be the default position. In cases of immediate operational need, including availability, risk critical circumstances, implementation will continue.

Attendance at Meetings/Appeals

5.3 Should the employee not be able to attend the meeting proposed, then the employee should suggest another meeting date within seven calendar days of the original meeting.

5.4 Representation of the employee's issues can also be made by representation, their companion, or in writing.

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Collective Grievances

- 5.6 Collective grievances relate to issues where the outcome has wider implications than just one individual or may require collective agreement.
- 5.7 Where either the authority or the recognised union determine that the matter is a collective issue, it may, at any stage, be transferred to stage one of the local negotiation procedure set out in Section 6, Part C of the Sixth Edition of the Scheme of Conditions of Service:

Stage 1

Other than for issues that arise initially at corporate level, the fire authority and/or recognised trade unions shall notify the other party of an issue that has arisen which falls within the purview of this procedure.

Where requested a meeting shall be arranged within ten working days to deal with the issue(s). As far as practicable any supporting information will be made available to all parties prior to the meeting taking place.

If no solution is found within ten working days the parties shall decide whether or not to continue discussion at this stage, refer to the next stage or end the discussion. Any party may refer the matter under negotiation to the next stage.

Stage 2

The Fire and Rescue authority and/or recognised trade unions shall notify the other parties of an issue of a corporate nature which comes within the purview of this procedure or which has been referred from a previous stage in this procedure.

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Where requested, a negotiating meeting at a level appropriate to the issue shall be arranged within ten working days to deal with the issue(s) raised. As far as practicable all parties will be provided with relevant information prior to the meeting taking place.

If no solution is found within ten working days of the meeting the parties shall decide whether or not to continue or conclude the discussion.

Where one party considers that external assistance may assist in resolving an issue at corporate level it may request the agreement of the other parties to this approach, and no party will unreasonably withhold agreement to such a request. Such a request shall be made within five working days of completion of discussion at the corporate stage. In such circumstances the parties may jointly agree to refer the issue to:

- (1) the NJC Joint Secretaries; and/or
- (2) ACAS; and/or
- (3) the NJC Resolution Advisory Panel (which shall comprise an Independent Chair and the Joint Secretaries)

to assist the parties further with their negotiations.

The above should be completed within twenty working days of the request for external assistance being made.

Grievances raised by former employees

- 5.11 Wherever possible a grievance should be dealt with before an employee leaves the Service. Where this has not been possible and/or where the employee has already left the Service's employment before raising the grievance, the Service's Complaints procedure will apply.

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Time Limits

- 5.12 Time limits applicable to the different stages of the procedure are set out in this policy. These may be varied by mutual agreement. Failure to meet a time limit should not invalidate any outcomes (e.g. an outcome letter sent outside of agreed timescales cannot be used as just cause for a new grievance to be upheld/not upheld, and the outcome would still be valid)

6. LINKS TO OTHER PROCEDURES

- 6.1 Although issues relating directly to other people procedures such as Disciplinary, Performance, Probation or Attendance Management (this list is not exhaustive) are outside the scope of the Grievance Procedure because they all have intrinsic appeal processes, there are occasions when there are legitimate reasons for an employee to raise a grievance (e.g. should a policy or process not be correctly applied, a Grievance with may be raised in that instance).
- 6.2 In such circumstances, the relevant manager will take advice from Human Resources and decide on the most appropriate and fair way of managing the situation. This could include, but is not limited to:
- Carrying out a single investigation covering all the issues
 - Consideration of the grievance at the hearing/meeting convened under the other procedure
 - Running the procedures concurrently
 - Suspending the other procedure for a short period until the grievance can be considered.

Harassment and Bullying (Dignity at Work)

- 6.3 Should an individual raise a complaint of harassment or bullying under the Dignity at Work framework, the Grievance Procedure will be applied to investigate the complaint. Where the investigation provides evidence of

Grievance Policy

misconduct, the Disciplinary Procedure will be evoked to conclude the investigation. The employees involved will be advised of the decision to move matters to the Disciplinary Procedure.

Recruitment, Transfers, Appointments and Promotion

- 6.4 Should an employee have a complaint relating to the application of the Recruitment and Selection, or Transfers, Appointments and Promotions procedures, this should be lodged as an appeal within those procedures.

Personal Development Review (Appraisal)

- 6.5 This procedure should not be used to express dissatisfaction with the Appraisal procedure. Any issues that arise from the Appraisal process should be discussed with line management.

7. MONITORING AND REVIEW

- 7.1 All Grievance cases will be monitored and recorded by the HR Department and reports submitted to the Service annually, or as required by the Service Leadership Team
- 7.2 The procedures will be formally reviewed at least every three years. The policy may updated more regularly to maintain compliance with legislation and best practice.

Implementation Date	Author	Summary of changes	Date to be reviewed
October 2019	Steve Tovey, HRBP	Full revision and consultation of newly worded policy	October 2022



Information Governance

POLICY - WHISTLEBLOWING

Number: 001

Last Updated: 04.02.19
Next Review Date: 01.07.2020

1.0 Summary of Changes

Policy transferred to new template and rewritten.

2.0 What this Policy is About?

This policy details how the Authority encourages openness and transparency and supports a culture where whistleblowing is deemed acceptable. It must be read in conjunction with the document 001 Information Governance Whistleblowing Procedure which explains how whistleblowing is instigated and processed.

3.0 Statement of Policy

The Service wants our service users and employees to feel confident in the organisation. Further, the Service will take action to create a positive 'listening culture'. Which is intended to support continuous improvement.

Whistleblowing is commonly understood as raising concerns about misconduct within an organisation or within an independent structure associated with it. It is important for members of the public and members of staff to understand that proof is not required. The individual should have a reasonable belief and submit any allegation in good faith. It doesn't matter if the concern is latterly judged unfounded providing that the whistleblower is genuinely troubled by the event in question at the time.

Concerns that can be raised include but are not limited to:-

Unsafe working practises/conditions

Impropriety

Breach of procedure or policy

Neglect of duty

Breach of acceptable standards of ethical/professional conduct

A criminal offence

Suspicion of fraud

A bullying culture (across a team or organisation rather than an individual instance which should be managed against the Bullying and Harassment Policy)

Inadequate training or induction for staff

Deliberate concealment of information in relation to any of the above.



Information Governance

POLICY - WHISTLEBLOWING

Number: 001

Last Updated: 04.02.19
Next Review Date: 01.07.2020

The Service as a whole has a responsibility to:

- Promote a culture which enables service users and employees to raise any legitimate concerns as outlined in this policy without fear of reprimand or reprisal
- Deal with all allegations appropriately, effectively and in a timely manner

Managers have a responsibility to:

- Ensure that concerns raised are taken seriously
- Investigate thoroughly and make an objective assessment of the concern
- Keep the whistleblower advised of progress
- Ensure that the action necessary to resolve a concern is taken
- Keep the Service Leadership Team/ The Authority of the Service informed.

Service Users and Employees have a responsibility to ensure that:

- They have reasonable evidence or belief about any wrongdoing before making an allegation
- They believe the wrongdoing about which they are complaining is serious in terms of detriment to the public or the Service
- Their allegation is not motivated by animosity towards the person(s) about whom they are complaining
- They are not making the allegation primarily for the purposes of personal gain.

Allegations of fraud, corruption and gross misconduct:

All employees, members, partners and associates are expected to provide information if fraud or corruption is suspected. It is recognised that accident investigation, tip off and whistle blowing can lead to the discovery of fraud. It is swift and decisive action of employee's and members of the public that often allows fraud to be detected. The Authority will always take action where evidence of fraud or corruption are apparent.



Information Governance

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Number: 001

Last Updated: 04.02.19
Next Review Date: 01.07.2020

If there is a suspicion of fraud, theft or other potential gross misconduct, the employee should act quickly to report it. If the concern is mentioned to the subject of the allegation or other colleagues it is likely that this will possibly prejudice an investigation.

Protection of 'whistleblowers'.

The legislation does not introduce a general protection for whistleblowers that applies in all circumstances. It applies to workers who follow procedures laid down in the legislation in disclosing specific categories of malpractice. These categories are quite wide. A disclosure will qualify for protection if, in the reasonable belief of the individual, it relates to one or more of the following actions:

- A criminal offence
- A failure to comply with a legal obligation
- A miscarriage of justice
- The endangering of an individual's health and safety
- Damage to the environment
- Deliberate concealment of information in relation to any of the above.

Why our Service should encourage staff to highlight malpractice.

Every organisation faces the risk that someone within the organisation might be aware of serious misconduct. It is perfectly understandable that these individuals will be concerned about the impact of whistleblowing. Effective risk management is dependent on the fact that employees are confident to raise their concerns without suffering any detriment. In the absence of such confidence, employees may stay silent even where there are serious threats to the employer, their colleagues or to the public. Silence denies organisations an opportunity to deal with a serious problem. The cost of a missed opportunity can be significant e.g. fines, compensation, damaged reputation, regulatory investigation, lost jobs or even loss of life.

A positive whistleblowing culture has numerous advantages:-

- Can lead to the detection of wrongdoing and can act as a deterrent in this respect
- Provides managers the information they need to make decisions and contain risk



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POLICY - WHISTLEBLOWING

Number: 001

Last Updated: 04.02.19
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- Demonstrates to stakeholders and regulators the Service is serious about good governance
- Reduces the chance of anonymous or malicious leaks (including to the media)
- Reduces the chance of legal claims against the organisation
- Respects the opinion and confidence of all employees, helping to create a trusting workplace.

4.0 Implications of the Policy

4.1 Finance / Staffing / Training / Other

There are no additional financial implications regarding the implementation of this policy.

The Assistant Director – Business Planning and Performance will liaise with the Managers to identify and take action in respect of:

- Common failings;
- Shared learning outcomes;
- Individual training needs of officers and staff.

Whistleblowing training and awareness will be made available to all staff through the Learning and Development Team.

4.2 Risk Assessment(s)

There is no specific risk assessment or health and safety consideration considered relevant to the content of this policy.

4.3 Equality Impact Assessment

This policy has been subject to an Equality Impact Assessment and has been graded as having a low potential impact. The assessment concluded the proposals in this policy would have no potential or actual differential impact on grounds of race, ethnicity, nationality, gender, transgender, disability, age, religion or belief or sexual orientation.

5.0 Consultation



Information Governance

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Number: 001

Last Updated: 04.02.19
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The following were invited to provide feedback in the consultation phase during the formulation of this document:

- *Service leadership Team*
- *Representative Bodies*
- *Inclusion Lead*
- *Office of the Police Fire Crime Commissioner*

6.0 Monitoring and Review

Performance Monitoring

The Authority will record the number of whistleblowing cases during each financial year and the outcomes from each. It will not record sensitive personal data, such as age or ethnicity. Whilst best practise would suggest this should be collected, the very low level of cases means that no meaningful analysis of the data could be made, and the data is therefore not required. This position will be subject to review.

Policy Review

The Performance and Data Department will formally review this policy and associated procedure on a yearly basis from the date of publication, to consider:

- Its effectiveness in the business area concerned;
- Any changes to legislation;
- Challenges to the procedure;
- Any identified concerns in relation to implementation

7.0 Related Service Policies or Related Procedures

001 Information Governance Whistleblowing Procedure.
002 Comments, Compliments and Complaints Policy
002 Comments, Compliments and Complaints Procedure
Grievance and Disciplinary Policy



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Last Updated: 04.02.19
Next Review Date: 01.07.2020

8.0 Other Source Documents, e.g. Legislation, Partnership Agreements (if applicable)

The Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998
Enterprise and Regulatory Reform Act 2013

Policy Author: Tracy King, Assistant Director – Business Planning and Performance

Policy Owner:

Cancellations: SO Vol 1/22 Whistleblowing Policy dated September 2006

Title	POLICY – Whistleblowing
Author/Owner	Tracy King/Rick Hylton
Status	Approved
Version	1.0
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Report title: Ethics and Integrity Framework	
Report to: Essex Police, Fire and Crime Panel	
Report author: Darren Horsman, Essex Police, Assistant Director for Communications and Public Engagement, Office of the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner for Essex	
Date: 31 October 2019	For: Noting
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County Divisions affected: All Essex	

1. Purpose of report

The purpose of this report is to provide the Panel with information about the arrangements of the Ethics and Integrity Framework within the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner's office.

2. Recommendations

The Panel is invited to note the content of the report, identifying any areas that require further clarification or comment.

Attachments:

Appendix 1: Essex Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner: Ethics and Integrity Framework

Essex Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner: Ethics and Integrity Framework

Introduction

Ethics and integrity are at the centre of the role of the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner ("the Commissioner"). Ethics are the values, principles and behaviours which underpin the conduct and work of the Commissioner, their Deputy and their staff. This also includes the Commissioner, Deputy Commissioner and Monitoring Officer as they undertake their roles in relation to the governance of Essex County Fire and Rescue Service. Integrity is at the heart of how we work - ensuring that the Commissioner, their Deputy and their staff behave openly and honestly, so the public can have confidence and trust in what we do.

The Commissioner has adopted Constitutions governing his activities relating to both policing and crime and fire and rescue services. The Constitutions set out how the Commissioner will work, how decisions are made and the procedures that will be followed to ensure that decision making is efficient and transparent and that the Commissioner is accountable to local people. The Constitutions also set out how the Commissioner will hold the Chief Constable and Chief Fire Officer to account. The Constitutions can be found under Publications on the PFCC website [here](#).

This Ethics and Integrity Framework sets out the values and principles that guide the conduct of the Commissioner, their Deputy and their staff. The details of this framework are presented below. The framework is underpinned by the Nolan Principles as set out in the publication *Standards in Public Life: First Report of the Committee on Standards in Public Life*.

The Nolan Principles are:

- a) **Selflessness** - Holders of public office should act solely in terms of the public interest. They should not do so in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family, or their friends.
- b) **Integrity** - Holders of public office should not place themselves under any financial or other obligation to outside individuals or organisations that might seek to influence them in the performance of their official duties.
- c) **Objectivity** - In carrying out public business, including making public appointments, awarding contracts, or recommending individuals for rewards and benefits, holders of public office should make choices on merit.

- d) **Accountability** - Holders of public office are accountable for their decisions and actions to the public and must submit themselves to whatever scrutiny is appropriate to their office.
- e) **Openness** - Holders of public office should be as open as possible about all the decisions and actions that they take. They should give reasons for their decisions and restrict information only when the wider public interest clearly demands.
- f) **Honesty** - Holders of public office have a duty to declare any private interests relating to their public duties and to take steps to resolve any conflicts arising in a way that protects the public interest.
- g) **Leadership** - Holders of public office should promote and support these principles by leadership and example.

The framework is also underpinned by the [Police Code of Ethics](#) which is the national policing code of practice setting out the principles and standards of professional behaviour for the policing profession in England and Wales. The Code of Ethics builds on the Nolan Principles and promotes self-awareness, ensuring that everyone involved in policing always feels able to do the right thing and to challenge colleagues where required irrespective of their rank, role or position. The Commissioner, and their Deputy will also conduct themselves in accordance with the Policing Code of Ethics.

The Police Code of Ethics is based around the following 9 principles:

- a) **Accountability** – You are answerable for your decisions, actions and omissions.
- b) **Fairness** – You treat people fairly.
- c) **Honesty** – You are truthful and trustworthy.
- d) **Integrity** - You always do the right thing.
- e) **Leadership** – You lead by good example.
- f) **Objectivity** – You make choices based on evidence and your best professional judgement.
- g) **Openness** – You are open and transparent in your decisions and actions.

h) **Respect** - You treat everyone with respect.

i) **Selflessness** – You act in the public interest.

The Commissioner, Deputy Commissioner and their staff must work honestly and ethically. The public expects people in these roles to do the right thing in the right way. Basing decisions and actions on the Nolan Principles and Police Code of Ethics will help us to achieve this.

Ethics and Integrity Framework

The framework sets out:

1. The standards and behaviours that the public can expect from the Commissioner, their Deputy and staff;
2. How they are accountable to the public, and how the public can in turn hold them to account, and
3. How the Commissioner holds the Chief Constable and Chief Fire Officer to account in the important areas of standards, public life and public service.
4. The role of statutory officers in ensuring ethics and integrity in the discharge of the Commissioner's functions.

1. Standards and behaviours that the public can expect from the Commissioner, their Deputy and their staff

As set out above, the Commissioner is committed to the Seven Principles of Public Life (also known as the 'Nolan Principles') as set out in the Government's Ministerial Code and published in *Standards in Public Life: First Report of the Committee on Standards in Public Life* and the Police Code of Ethics.

i. Selflessness

Holders of public office should act solely in terms of the public interest. They should not do so in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family, or their friends.

The Commissioner publishes a register of gifts and hospitality (both accepted and declined) offered to himself, his deputy or any member of his staff on the website. This is regularly updated. You can find it [here](#).

ii. *Integrity*

Holders of public office should always do the right thing. They should not place themselves under any financial or other obligation to outside individuals or organisations that might seek to influence them in the performance of their official duties.

The Commissioner is committed to transparency, ensuring that relevant information and data is put in the public domain and published on his website as part of the Commissioner's Publication Protocol. This includes ensuring that any disclosable interests are visible to the public. You can find those [here](#). Staff are also required to declare relevant interests that might impact on their role working for the Commissioner.

The Commissioner ensures that all information identified in the Specified Information Orders below are published either directly on the Commissioner's website or on [Essex Police's](#) website or the [Essex County Fire and Rescue Service website](#).

- [The Elected Local Policing Bodies \(Specified Information\) Order 2011](#)
- [The Elected Local Policing Bodies \(Specified Information\) \(Amendment\) Order 2012](#)
- [The Elected Local Policing Bodies \(Specified Information\) \(Amendment\) Order 2013](#)

iii. *Objectivity*

In carrying out public business, including making public appointments, awarding contracts, or recommending individuals for rewards and benefits, holders of public office should make choices on merit.

The financial arrangements of the Commissioner are set the in the PFCC's Financial and Procurement Regulations, which the Commissioner, Deputy Commissioner and all staff are required to abide by. All relevant information, such as the Commissioner's Contracts Registers, is published transparently on the Essex Police and Essex County Fire and Rescue Service websites.

All staff appointments to the Commissioner's office are made following an open and transparent process and in accordance with the Essex Police Recruitment and Retention of Staff Policy. Appointments to the posts of the Chief Constable, Chief Fire Officer, Chief Executive and Treasurer are made following the process set out in the Constitutions.

Essex Police's Corporate Vetting Unit (CVU) is required to clear all staff, third parties and contractors who require access to police information, equipment, infrastructure and assets prior to appointment or a significant change of role.

iv. Accountability

Holders of public office are accountable for their decisions, actions and omissions to the public and must submit themselves to whatever scrutiny is appropriate to their office.

The PFCC is elected by and accountable to the public. The Commissioner and their Deputy will attend regular public meetings and will engage directly with local communities, including under-represented and vulnerable groups through involvement in Independent Advisory Groups, the Essex Faith Covenant and regular group specific engagement activity.

The decisions of the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner are scrutinised by the Essex Police, Fire and Crime Panel which is made up of elected representatives from each district and unitary authority, plus two independent members. Panel meetings are open to the public and records are published [here](#).

Openness

Holders of public office should be as open and transparent as possible about all the decisions and actions that they take. They should give reasons for their decisions and restrict information only when the wider public interest clearly demands.

Within the Constitutions, the Commissioner has adopted the following principles of decision-making:

- (a) The presumption in favour of openness and transparency;
- (b) The need for consultation with interested parties;
- (c) The need to take account of relevant professional advice from appropriate officers;
- (d) The need for clarity of aims and desired outcomes;
- (e) The need to identify the range of options considered;
- (f) The need to give reasons and explanation for a decision, and
- (g) The need to have due regard to the Government Security Classifications when considering disclosure of reports and documents supplied to him / her.

In addition, the Constitutions specify that the exercise of any delegated authority to take a decision on behalf of the Commissioner is subject to the following –

- (a) The person making the decision has first considered a written report prepared by an appropriate officer;
- (b) Any decision taken shall be in accordance with the Commissioner's budget and policy framework, financial regulations and contract standing orders and any condition imposed by the law, the relevant Constitution and any relevant statutory guidance;
- (c) Any person may, as the Commissioner may determine appropriate, refer any matter falling within the authority delegated to him / her to the Commissioner, and
- (d) The fact that a function has been delegated shall not prevent the discharge of that function by the Commissioner.

Decisions made by the Commissioner are published on their website [here](#), and comments the Commissioner makes about inspections reports by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary, Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) are available [here](#). The Commissioner also publishes details of all expenditure over £500, which can be found [here](#).

The Commissioner also publishes papers and information from the Strategic Boards, Performance and Resource Boards and Audit Committees for both Fire and Rescue and Crime and Policing. These include regular performance information. The Commissioner uses the Government Security Classifications for these papers and others handled by the office. These papers can be found via:

[Policing and Crime – Boards and decision making](#)

[Fire and Rescue – Boards and decision making](#)

The Commissioner also provides the public with information and ensures compliance with the Freedom of Information Act and associated legislation and regulations through the Access to Information Policy which can be viewed [here](#).

The Commissioner keeps the public informed about how he / she holds the Chief Constable to account for how Essex Police is performing in the delivery of the Police and Crime Plan and how he / she holds the Chief Fire Officer to account for the delivery of the Fire and Rescue Plan. The Commissioner also publishes a quarterly performance report on matters relating to police professional standards [here](#) and considers quarterly reports on complaints and grievances within the Fire and Rescue Service at the Performance and Resource Board – Fire and Rescue.

On a regular basis, the Commissioner also issues proactive press releases about their work, and holds a range of engagement events throughout the county bringing senior leaders from both services together with members of the public. Recent news can be viewed [here](#) and copies of the minutes from public meetings can be viewed [here](#).

The Commissioner also ensures that details of the remuneration of the Commissioner, their Deputy, chief officers and members of their senior team are publicly available [here](#).

v. *Honesty*

Holders of public office must be truthful and trustworthy. They have a duty to declare any private interests relating to their public duties and to take steps to resolve any conflicts arising in a way that protects the public interest.

All disclosable interests, of both the Commissioner and their Deputy are made available to the public and can be found [here](#). Where any conflict of interest or potential for conflict arises, the Commissioner is committed to declaring it at the earliest opportunity and taking action to resolve it. Staff notify any disclosable interests to the Chief Executive and Essex Police (as part of the vetting process).

vi. *Leadership*

Holders of public office should lead by good example and should actively promote and robustly support these principles in how they act and lead.

The PFCC has Codes of Conduct which highlight the responsibility of the Commissioner and the Deputy, as well as all members of staff, to behave in an open, transparent and impartial manner. This includes the provision of impartial advice to the Commissioner and their Deputy. You can find the Codes of Conduct, as well as the Commissioner's Anti-Fraud and Corruption Strategy, at the links below.

[Staff Code of Conduct](#)

[PFCC Voluntary Code of Conduct \(Scroll down to Schedule 7 within the PFCC Constitution\)](#)

[Anti-Fraud and Corruption Strategy \(Scroll down to Schedule 15 within the PFCC Constitution\)](#)

Essex Police and Essex County Fire and Rescue Service each have grievance and whistleblowing policies in place to ensure staff are able to raise concerns in a safe environment. Staff in the Commissioner's office are also covered by the Essex Police Whistleblowing Policy. There are also clear complaint processes in place for the public to raise

and have resolved issues that they are concerned with. The complaint policies can be viewed [here](#) for Essex Police and [here](#) for Essex County Fire and Rescue Service. The procedures for dealing with complaints against the Commissioner and Deputy Commissioner are set out later in this document.

The Commissioner, along with the Chief Constable, has agreed and provided leadership for the development and implementation of the Anti-Fraud and Bribery Policy. This sets a zero tolerance approach to fraud and misappropriation and applies to all employees of the Commissioner and Essex Police regardless of position held, as well as consultants, vendors, contractors and other parties who have a business relationship with the PFCC or Essex Police.

vii. Fairness (Principle from the Police Code of Conduct)

Holders of public office should treat people fairly

Decisions made by the Commissioner are published on their website [here](#) and [here](#). Information explaining the benefits of making the decision and how it fits into the Police and Crime Plan or Fire and Rescue Plan priorities are included in each published decision report. To demonstrate a fair process has been followed, each decision also sets out the potential alternative options which were considered and why these were not taken.

The Commissioner's decisions are scrutinised by the Police, Fire and Crime Panel. The Panel receives a list of all decisions made by the Commissioner at each of its meetings and is able to scrutinise the fairness of these decisions. The Panel is made up of representatives from each of the tier one and tier two councils in Essex so represents all of the residents of the county. Details of the Panel membership and copies of the agendas, papers for [The Essex Police, Fire and Crime Panel](#) can be viewed here.

viii. Respect (Principle from the Police Code of Conduct)

Holders of public office should treat people with respect

Respect is a key part of the PFCC's Voluntary Code of Conduct and is also featured prominently in the Commissioner's team values. The team values are integrated into the Performance Development Plans for all members of the Commissioner's Team. The values are discussed at team meetings and away days and are monitored through a regular staff engagement survey.

2) How the Commissioner is accountable to the public, and how the public can in turn hold the Commissioner to account

The Commissioner is elected by the people of Essex, and is directly accountable to the electorate.

[The Essex Police, Fire and Crime Panel](#), which is made up of elected representatives from each district and unitary authority, plus two independent members, is another mechanism by which the Commissioner is held accountable. The Panel has a number of powers and responsibilities. These include:

- The power to veto (by two-thirds majority) the proposed precepts for Essex Police and Essex County Fire and Rescue Service and the proposed candidates for Chief Constable and Chief Fire Officer. The Panel also has the power to appoint an acting Commissioner where the incumbent Commissioner is incapacitated, resigns or is disqualified
- Reviewing the draft Police and Crime Plan and draft Fire and Rescue Plan and making recommendations to which the PFCC must have regard
- Reviewing the Commissioner's Annual Report (with regard to Essex Police) and Statement of Assurance (with regard to Essex County Fire and Rescue Service) and making reports and recommendations at a public meeting, which the Commissioner must attend
- Considering complaints against the Commissioner and the Deputy Commissioner, although serious complaints and conduct matters must be passed to the Independent Office for Police Conduct (IOPC) in line with legislation
- Asking HMICFRS for a professional view, should the Commissioner intend to dismiss the Chief Constable or Chief Fire Officer
- Holding confirmation hearings for the Commissioner's proposed chief executive, chief finance officer and Deputy Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner appointments

The Police, Fire and Crime Panel must review or scrutinise decisions and actions taken by the Commissioner and make and publish reports or recommendations to the Commissioner with respect to the discharge of the Commissioner's functions.

The Panel is required to hold a minimum of four public meetings a year. Papers can be accessed [here](#).

Strategic Boards

The Commissioner chairs quarterly Strategic Board meetings relating to both Essex Police and Essex County Fire and Rescue Service. These Boards recommend to the Commissioner strategic decisions relating to areas such as delivery of the Police and Crime Plan and Fire and Rescue Plan; estates / assets and IT / information management strategies; strategic finance issues, and strategic change and transformation programmes.

The Commissioner publishes information relating to the Strategic Board for Policing and Crime [here](#) and the Strategic Board for Fire and Rescue [here](#).

Scrutiny Programme

The Commissioner operates a thorough scrutiny programme, which analyses Essex Police's and Essex County Fire and Rescue Service's performance. The Policing and Crime and Fire and Rescue Performance and Resources Scrutiny Boards each meet on a monthly basis to consider performance against a number of areas including:

- Priorities within the Police and Crime Plan and Fire and Rescue Plan and the associated performance metrics
- Budgetary controls and the delivery of planned transformation and efficiency savings
- Performance against the medium term financial plan and capital programmes, as well as use of reserves
- Outcomes and recommendations arising from HMICFRS inspections and Peer Reviews
- Victim / customer and employee satisfaction survey results and the actions taken in response
- Corporate support such as HR, IT and Estates

Such scrutiny provides assurances to the Commissioner regarding operational delivery of police and fire and rescue services, as well as helping the Commissioner to identify areas where he / she can work together with the Chief Constable or Chief Fire Officer to improve outcomes.

The Commissioner publishes all information regarding meetings under the scrutiny programme [here](#).

Public meetings

The Commissioner holds a range of public meetings and engagement events, where the public can ask questions about how he / she is delivering for the people of Essex in their role as PFCC, and how they are ensuring Essex Police and Essex County Fire and Rescue Service perform to the very best of their ability to secure the safety of the people of Essex.

The Commissioner also regularly meets with councillors and MPs to give both the public and their elected representatives the chance to raise any concerns about policing and crime and fire and rescue services in Essex. A senior leader from both Essex Police and Essex County Fire and Rescue Service attend these sessions and provide an update on the performance of their service, followed by an opportunity for members of the public to ask questions of either the Commissioner or the two services. These meetings form a crucial part of the Commissioner's role in scrutinising the work of Essex Police and Essex County Fire and Rescue Service and holding them to account for the services they provide.

PFCC and CC and CFO performance meetings

The Commissioner has formal performance meetings with the Chief Constable and Chief Fire Officer on a regular (approximately four weekly) basis to discuss issues from the scrutiny programme, as well as to raise concerns that the public and other elected officials have raised with the Commissioner.

Complaints

The Commissioner is responsible for holding the Chief Constable and the Chief Fire Officer to account and for ensuring that both services are delivered efficiently, effectively and fairly. The Commissioner has a process for looking into complaints that are made, and where matters are not within the Commissioner's remit (e.g. those matters that are to do with operational policing or the operational activity of the Fire and Rescue Service), the Commissioner's office will pass these to the relevant service to respond.

The Commissioner's office also undertakes a dip sample of complaints made to Essex Police, the findings from which are discussed at quarterly meeting with the Deputy Chief Constable along with the full statistical quarterly reports on all complaints, grievances and disciplinary cases. These are published regularly on the Commissioner's website and can be found [here](#)

The Commissioner is the appeal body for complaints against Essex County Fire and Rescue Service and regularly undertakes reviews of finalised grievance cases. Information relating to all complaints and disciplinary cases are included with the Performance and Resource Board. The papers and minutes for this board can be viewed [here](#).

The Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner's staff also abide by a [Code of Conduct](#) and any complaints against them will be considered by the Chief Executive. Complaints against the Chief Executive will be considered by the Commissioner or their Deputy.

Allegations and Complaints against the PFCC and the DPFCC

Any complaints made against the Commissioner and / or their Deputy go to the Police, Fire and Crime Panel ('the Panel') (more detail is available [here](#)) for review and investigation. The Panel has responsibility for the initial handling of complaints made about the conduct of the Commissioner or that of the Deputy Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner. The handling of such complaints is governed by a statutory complaints procedure. The panel is required to refer any criminal complaints to the Independent Office for Police Conduct (IOPC).

3) How the Commissioner holds the Chief Constable and Chief Fire Officer to account in the important areas of standards, public life and public service

Essex Police and Essex County Fire and Rescue Service are guided by the Nolan Principles. Essex Police officers and staff are additionally guided by the [Police Code of Ethics](#). Supported by the Police, Fire and Crime Panel's Ethics and Integrity Sub-Committee, the Commissioner monitors how well both services are delivering against these standards and, working with the Chief Constable and Chief Fire Officer, uses this to help drive improvements. In addition, HMICFRS inspects all police forces and fire and rescue services in the area of ethics and values.

Out of Court Disposals

An out of court disposal is a community sanction, or a formal warning, or a fine that a member of the public who has committed an offence agrees to accept from the Police in preference to being charged with an offence and appearing before a court of law. There is a requirement for the victim to be consulted and their wishes determined before an out of court disposal decision is made.

Essex Police was amongst the first Forces to establish an Out of Court Disposals Panel to review all disposals determined by the Police. The Commissioner's office Chairs the Panel, with wider membership including local magistrates and representatives from the voluntary and community sector. The Panel has no executive authority, but reviews cases and provides feedback to Essex Police around appropriateness of use of the sanction and review of the legality. Where the Panel believes that the disposal was not appropriate it will submit a recommendation to Essex Police, accompanied by a request for a further review by an operational manager within the line management structure.

Promoting high professional standards in Essex Police and Monitoring of the Professional Standards Department

The Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner is committed to ensuring that the standards of professional behaviour originating from the Police (Conduct) Regulations and Police Staff Council Joint Circular 54 are embedded across Essex Police. These standards relate to:

- **Honesty and integrity** – I will be honest and act with integrity at all times, and not compromise or abuse my position.
- **Authority, respect and courtesy** – I will act with self-control and tolerance, treating members of the public and colleagues with respect and courtesy. I will use my powers and authority lawfully and proportionately, and will respect the rights of all individuals.
- **Equality and diversity** – I will act with fairness and impartiality. I will not discriminate unlawfully or unfairly.
- **Use of force** – I will only use force as part of my role and responsibilities, and only to the extent that is necessary, proportionate and reasonable in all the circumstances.
- **Orders and instructions** – I will give and carry out lawful orders only, and will abide by Police Regulations. I will give reasonable instructions only, and will follow all reasonable instructions.
- **Duties and responsibilities** – I will be diligent in the exercise of my duties and responsibilities.
- **Confidentiality** – I will treat information with respect, and access or disclose it only in the proper course of my duties.
- **Fitness for work** – I will ensure, when on duty or at work, that I am fit to carry out my responsibilities.
- **Conduct** – I will behave in a manner, whether on or off duty, which does not bring discredit on the police service or undermine public confidence in policing.
- **Challenging and reporting improper behaviour** – I will report, challenge or take action against the conduct of colleagues which has fallen below the standards of professional behaviour.

The Commissioner publishes a quarterly performance report on matters pertaining to police professional standards [here](#). The Commissioner also reviews and scrutinises the outcomes of

police officer and police staff members' misconduct cases. The Commissioner's office undertakes regular dip sampling of complaints made by the public and the outcomes reached by Essex Police, providing the appropriate level of scrutiny in this area.

Monitoring professional standards in Essex County Fire and Rescue Service

The Commissioner is committed to ensuring Essex County Fire and Rescue Service operates according to the Nolan Principles and the public can have trust and confidence in the Service and the work that it does.

Along with regular performance reports, the Commissioner receives and publishes regular reports relating to complaints, grievances and disciplinary hearings undertaken by the Service. The Commissioner considers all appeals against the Service's complaint decisions and spot checks the handling of grievance and disciplinary cases.

4) The role of statutory officers in ensuring ethics and integrity in the discharge of the Commissioner's functions

The Commissioner must appoint -

- (a) a person to be the head of the Commissioner's staff (Chief Executive), who will also act as the Monitoring Officer, and
- (b) a person to be responsible for the proper administration of their financial affairs (Treasurer), who must be a member of an accountancy body specified in section 113 of the Local Government Finance Act 1988.

The "Head of Paid Service" means the person designated by the Commissioner under section 4 (1) (a) of the Local Government Act 1989.

The Monitoring Officer

The Chief Executive (designated Head of Paid Service under Section 4 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 and designated Monitoring Officer under Section 5 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989) shall have the following functions and areas of responsibility -

- (a) Overall corporate management;
- (b) Overall operational responsibility (including overall management responsibility for all staff);
- (c) Strategic development and performance on behalf of the Commissioner;

- (d) Provision of professional advice to the Commissioner in the decision-making process;
- (e) Responsibility for a system of record keeping for all decisions of the Commissioner, and
- (f) Representing the Commissioner on partnership and external bodies (as required).

The Monitoring Officer will:

- Maintain up to date versions of the Constitutions and will ensure that they are widely available for consultation by the Commissioner, the Chief Constable, the Chief Fire Officer, their staff and the public.
- Ensure that all major policies and strategies are updated regularly and that ownership of the plan or policy is attributed to the appropriate officer.
- After consulting with the Treasurer, report to the Commissioner and to the Police, Fire and Crime Panel if he / she considers that any proposal, decision or omission by the Commissioner, by any committee or sub-committee of the Commissioner, by any person holding any office or employment under the Commissioner or by any joint committee on which the Commissioner is represented has given rise, is likely to or would give rise to a contravention of any enactment, rule of law or of any code of practice made or approved by or under any enactment.

The Commissioner is obliged to consider any such report no later than three months after being sent a copy of the report. Such a report will have the effect of stopping the proposal or decision being implemented until the report has been considered.

- Contribute to the promotion and maintenance of high standards of conduct, including through provision of support to the Strategic Boards.
- Ensure that decisions of the Commissioner, together with the reasons for those decisions and relevant staff reports and background papers, are made publicly available as soon as possible.

- Be the primary qualified person with regard to the disclosure of exempt information under Section 36 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000. In the absence of the Monitoring Officer, responsibility for carrying out the function will fall to the Treasurer.
- Provide advice on the scope of powers and authority to take decisions, maladministration, financial impropriety, probity and budget to the Commissioner.
- Where requested so do to, exercise powers and duties delegated by the Police, Fire and Crime Panel in relation to complaints against the Commissioner and Deputy Commissioner. This may include the receipt of complaints, the recording of them and notification to the Police, Fire and Crime Panel in accordance with the relevant regulations.

The Treasurer / Section 151 Officer

The Treasurer has the responsibility for the administration of the PFCC's financial affairs under section 151 of the Local Government Act 1972, section 73 of the Local Government Act 1985 and section 112 of the Local Government Finance Act 1988.

The Treasurer will:

- Have responsibility for the administration of the financial affairs of the Commissioner and ensure maintenance of an efficient and effective internal audit function.
- Take responsibility for the strategic direction and scrutiny of the budget for the Commissioner.
- Contribute to the corporate management of the office of the Commissioner, in particular through the provision of professional financial advice.
- Provide advice on the scope of powers and authority to take decisions, maladministration, financial impropriety, probity and the budget and will support and advise the Commissioner and their staff in their respective roles with regard to these matters.
- Provide financial information to the media, members of the public and the community.

- Shall, after consulting with the Chief Executive, make a report to the Commissioner if it appears to him / her that the Commissioner, a committee of the Commissioner, a person holding any office or employment under the Commissioner, a member of Essex Police force, the Essex County Fire and Rescue Service or a joint committee on which the Commissioner is represented -

(a) has made or is about to make a decision which involves or would involve the Commissioner incurring expenditure which is unlawful,

(b) has taken or is about to take a course of action which, if pursued to its conclusion, would be unlawful and likely to cause a loss or deficiency on the part of the Commissioner, or

(c) is about to enter an item of account the entry of which is unlawful.

The Treasurer shall also make a report to the Commissioner if it appears to him / her that the expenditure of the Commissioner incurred (including expenditure he / she proposes to incur) in a financial year is likely to exceed the resources (including sums borrowed) available to them to meet that expenditure.

Where the Treasurer makes a report to the Commissioner in accordance with the provisions above, the Commissioner must consider the report and decide whether he / she agrees or disagrees with the views contained in the report and what action (if any) they propose to take in consequence of it. The consideration and decision-making must be concluded not later than 21 days after the report is sent. The Treasurer must notify the Commissioner's auditor of any decisions taken by the Commissioner in accordance with the provisions above.

In carrying out their functions the Treasurer shall have regard to section 17 ss (4) and (5) of the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011 to ensure that, in carrying out his / her functions, the Commissioner has regard to and undertakes their financial governance in accordance with any financial code of practice issued by the Secretary of State.