

ROYAL BERKSHIRE FIRE AUTHORITY REPORT



COMMITTEE	AUDIT AND GOVERNANCE
DATE OF MEETING	24 JANUARY 2022
SUBJECT	GRIEVANCE, BULLYING AND HARASSMENT POLICY; ANTI-FRAUD, BRIBERY AND CORRUPTION POLICY; EMPLOYEE CODE OF CONDUCT; BEHAVIOURAL COMPETENCY FRAMEWORK
LEAD OFFICER	BECCI JEFFERIES, HEAD OF HR AND LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT
LEAD MEMBER	N/A
EXEMPT INFORMATION	NONE
ACTION	DECISION

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 The Audit and Governance Committee's Terms of Reference require the Committee to approve and monitor the effectiveness and outcomes relating to a number of the Authority's policies including:
- Grievance, Bullying and Harassment Policy
 - Anti-Fraud, Bribery and Corruption Policy
- 1.2 A review of the policies outlined above has been undertaken and they are presented for approval and consideration by the Committee.
- 1.3 The Employee Code of Conduct and Behavioural Competency Framework has been updated to ensure alignment with the national Core Code of Ethics for Fire and Rescue Services (published May 2021). These documents are attached for information.

2. RECOMMENDATION

That the Audit and Governance Committee:

- 2.1 **Approve** the revised policies listed below, subject to any further amendments the Committee may wish to make
- Grievance, Bullying and Harassment Policy
 - Anti-Fraud, Bribery and Corruption Policy

2.2 **Note** the changes to the Employee Code of Conduct and the Behavioural Competency Framework

3. REPORT

Employee Code of Conduct and Behavioural Competency Framework

3.1 A presentation was delivered to the Fire Authority by Deputy Chief Executive Nikki Richards on 17 February 2021, introducing the draft Core Code of Ethics for Fire and Rescue Services in England. The Core Code was published nationally in May 2021.

3.2 Work has been undertaken to align RBFRS' Employee Code of Conduct (Appendix C) and the Behavioural Competency Framework (Appendix D) with the national Core Code of Ethics. A gap analysis has also been undertaken to ensure that policies and processes throughout RBFRS align to the revised Employee Code of Conduct and Behavioural Competency Framework, including the policies appended to this report that require approval by the Audit and Governance Committee.

3.3 These policies are currently under consultation.

Grievance, Bullying and Harassment Policy

3.4 The Grievance, Bullying and Harassment Policy (Appendix A) has been updated to incorporate feedback from Stonewall to include further information on the definition of discrimination, an inclusion of a section on Dual Discrimination and further examples of inappropriate behaviour.

3.5 A more specific link to the Say-So employee complaints hotline has been included.

3.6 The Policy Statement has been re-worded to ensure closer alignment with the Employee Code of Conduct and Behavioural Competency Framework.

3.7 The policy has been added to the new policy template and an initial equality impact assessment has been undertaken.

3.8 The policy will be forwarded for formal consultation following approval from the Audit and Governance Committee.

Anti-Fraud, Bribery and Corruption Policy

3.9 The Anti-Fraud, Bribery and Corruption Policy (Appendix B) has been added to the new policy template, minor grammatical changes have been made and an initial equality impact assessment has been undertaken.

3.10 An additional reference has been made in the 'Supporting Information' section to the Employee Code of Conduct.

3.11 There are no substantive issues requiring further consultation.

4. CONTRIBUTION TO STRATEGIC COMMITMENTS

- 4.1 Commitment 4 – We will seek opportunities to contribute to a broader safety, health and wellbeing agenda, whilst delivering our core functions.
- 4.2 Commitment 5 – We will ensure that Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service provides good value for money.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from this report.

6. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

The policy and procedure to be reviewed contribute to the compliance with the following legislation:

- 6.1 Employment Rights Act 1996
- 6.2 Data Protection Act 2018
- 6.3 The Fraud Act 2006
- 6.4 The Bribery Act 2010
- 6.5 The Equality Act 2010

7. EQUALITY DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 These policies and procedures contribute to the RBFRS People Strategy specifically in respect of:
- Culture, one team working collaboratively for the people we serve
 - Clarity on the decision-making levels, accountability and processes without unnecessary hierarchy
 - A focus on excellent communication of key messages in an open way using a wide range of engagement methods
 - Developing an internal customer service culture – making processes easy to use for people.
- 7.2 An initial Equality Impact Assessment has been carried out in respect of each of these policies.

8. RISK IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 There are no significant risk management issues arising from this report.

9. CONSISTENCY WITH DUTY TO COLLABORATE

- 9.1 N/A

10. PRINCIPAL CONSULTATION

- 10.1 Monitoring Officer
- 10.2 Head of Finance and Procurement

- 10.3 Chief Fire Officer
- 10.4 These policies have been subject to consultation with Representative Bodies and staff

11. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 11.1 Minutes of the meeting of the Royal Berkshire Fire Authority 17 February 2021

12. APPENDICES

- 12.2 Appendix A – Grievance, Bullying and Harassment Policy
- 12.3 Appendix B – Anti-Fraud, Bribery and Corruption Policy
- 12.4 Appendix C – Employee Code of Conduct
- 12.5 Appendix D – Behavioural Competency Framework

13. CONTACT DETAILS

- 13.1 Becci Jefferies
Head of Human Resources and Learning and Development
0118 9384670