

## DISCIPLINE POLICY

### REPORT OF THE CHIEF FIRE OFFICER



For Approval

#### 1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To inform Elected Members of the Authority's revised Discipline Policy attached as Appendix 1.

#### 2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 Members are asked to approve the Discipline Policy attached as Appendix 1.

#### 3. DISCIPLINE POLICY

- 3.1 The Authority's Disciplinary Policy, attached as Appendix A, has been reviewed in line with the Authority's Key Document Framework arrangements. It has been subject to consultation with Unison and the Fire Brigades' Union and their feedback has been considered as part of this review.
- 3.2 The policy is aligned to the ACAS Code on Disciplinary and Grievance Procedures and is designed to support employees to achieve and maintain the satisfactory standards required by Cleveland Fire Brigade.
- 3.3 The review has also considered the recommendations within HMICFRS report 'Values and culture in fire and rescue services' (March 2023), specifically:

**Recommendation 4:** Chief Fire Officers should assure themselves that updates on how concerns are being handled are shared with those who have raised them. The updates should be given in an accessible way that encourages trust and confidence in the service response. Consideration should be given to creating professional standards function to handle conduct concerns in service (or from an external service) to have oversight of cases, to make sure they are conducted in a fair and transparent way and to act as a point of contact for all staff involved

**Recommendation 17:** Chief Fire Officers should notify HMICFRS of any allegations that have the potential to constitute staff gross misconduct that:

- Involve allegations of a criminal nature that have the potential to affect public confidence in the fire and rescue service
- Are of a serious nature
- Relate to assistant chief fire officers or those at equivalent or higher grades

- 3.4 Detailed changes are highlighted within the policy and associated procedure in yellow.
- 3.5 The Policy statement, roles and responsibilities still reflect the original policy with minor additions to reflect responsibilities of the Authority, the Employee Relations Advisory Panel; the Legal Advisor and Monitoring Officer; the Hearing Manager and the Investigating Manager.
- 3.6 The role of HR has been clarified throughout.
- 3.7 The associated procedure includes minor amendments but also seeks to strengthen specific aspects such as reference to the Authority's 'Employee Code of Conduct', 'Values and Ethical Behaviours Framework', improved welfare and support arrangements, and reference to the recently implement 'Integrity Health Check'.
- 3.8 The importance of organisational learning is captured by the inclusion of a debrief process which will be carried out at the conclusion of all disciplines by either HR or in the case of appeals heard by the Authority, the Assistant Chief Fire Officer Strategic Planning & Resources.
- 3.9 The Policy has been equality impact assessed in accordance with the Brigade's procedure. The findings of the Impact Assessment conclude that we may need to make reasonable adjustments with some disabilities to ensure that there is no detrimental impact on employees with a disability as a protected characteristic.

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