

SOUTH YORKSHIRE FIRE & RESCUE AUTHORITY
ANTI-FRAUD AND CORRUPTION POLICY

Date Approved:	09/01/2024
Date Revised:	December 2023
Date of Next Review:	December 2026 (3 years or earlier if changes to legislation)
Owner:	Director of Finance and Procurement

FOREWARD:

“South Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Authority is funded by public money, through council tax, business rates and other sources. Fraud against the Authority is essentially theft of this money and the Authority takes its role as a guardian of these public funds seriously.

The Anti-Fraud and Corruption Policy forms part of the Counter Fraud Framework which outlines the measures the Authority will take to tackle fraud and corruption.

We will seek to identify areas where fraud may occur and limit opportunities for fraudsters to exploit the Authority. Where fraud is suspected we will investigate robustly, and where it is proved will utilise all measures available to us to deal with criminals and recover any losses.”

1. POLICY STATEMENT

- 1.1 The South Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Authority is committed to protecting the public funds that it administers, and consequently the Authority will not tolerate any abuse of its services. The Authority is determined to prevent, deter and detect all forms of fraud, bribery and corruption committed against it, whether that be internal or from outside the Authority.
- 1.2 The Authority is determined that the culture and tone of the organisation is one of honesty and rigorous opposition to fraud, bribery and corruption. Thus, the Authority is committed to ensuring all of its business is conducted in an open, honest, equitable and fair manner, and is accountable to all the people within South Yorkshire.
- 1.3 The Authority will not tolerate fraud or corruption committed, or attempted, by its elected members, co-opted elected members, employees, suppliers, contractors or service users and will take all necessary steps to investigate allegations of fraud or corruption and pursue sanctions available in each case, including removal from office, dismissal and/or prosecution and the recovery of Authority assets and funds.
- 1.4 The measures adopted by the Authority in its commitment to the prevention, deterrence and detection of fraud, bribery and corruption are set out in detail in the Authority's:
 - Anti-Bribery Policy;
 - Anti-Fraud and Corruption Strategy;
 - Prosecutions Policy;
 - Fraud Response Plan.

2. FRAUD

- 2.1 The **Fraud Act 2006** is used for the criminal prosecution of fraud offences. The Authority also deals with fraud in non-criminal disciplinary matters.
- 2.2 The Fraud Act created a general offence of fraud which might be committed in three ways:
 - Fraud by false representation;
 - Fraud by failing to disclose information; and
 - Fraud by abuse of position.

2.3 For the purposes of this document fraud is defined as; the dishonest action designed to facilitate gain (personally or for another) at the expense of the Authority, the residents of South Yorkshire or the wider national community.

2.4 'Fraud' has moved away from the concept of the deceit of another to the dishonest intent of the fraudster to make a gain or cause a loss or risk of a loss. Thus, the arena of fraud is far more reaching than the simple crime of theft.

3. THEFT

3.1 Theft is the act of stealing any property belonging to the Authority or which has been entrusted to it (i.e. client funds), including cash, equipment, vehicles, data.

3.2 Theft does not necessarily require fraud to be committed. Theft can also include the stealing of property belonging to another whilst on Authority property.

4. BRIBERY AND CORRUPTION

4.1 The Bribery Act 2010 came into force on 1st July 2011 and creates offences of:

- Accepting a bribe;
- Bribery of another person;
- Bribing a foreign official; and
- Failure to prevent bribery.

4.2 The Authority defines corruption as:

The offering, giving, soliciting or acceptance of an inducement or reward for performing an act, or failing to perform an act, designed to influence official action or decision making.

These inducements can take many forms including for examples cash, holidays, event tickets, meals.

4.3 The Authority's **Anti-Bribery Policy** provides guidance to staff on action to be taken to prevent bribery and how to report concerns of alleged bribery or corruption.

5. REPORTING FRAUD, BRIBERY AND CORRUPTION

5.1 The Authority encourages and expects its employees and elected members to report incidents of suspected fraud, bribery and corruption to the Director of Finance and Procurement. Where those employees or elected members with matter to report have confidentiality concerns, a **Confidential Reporting ('Whistleblowing') Policy** is in place. The public are able to utilise the corporate complaints procedure to raise a concern about wrongdoing.

6. INVESTIGATING ALLEGATIONS OF FRAUD, BRIBERY AND CORRUPTION

6.1 A **Fraud Response Plan** has been prepared to guide managers on action to be taken should they receive an allegation of fraud or corruption.

6.2 In normal cases it will be the Director of Finance and Procurement, with the assistance of a Corporate Anti-Fraud Team, as required, or, if necessary, supported by Internal

Audit that will undertake or direct the investigation. Matters of a criminal nature will be referred to the Police.

7. MONITORING FRAUD, BRIBERY AND CORRUPTION

- 7.1 The Audit and Governance Committee will have responsibility for monitoring the performance and effectiveness of the Corporate Anti-Fraud and Corruption Policy and Strategy through an annual review process.