



HUMBERSIDE FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE

Service Improvement

Corporate Communication, Social Media and Events Policy

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What we must
do well



How we support our
communities



We value and support
the people we employ



We efficiently manage
the Service

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1. INTRODUCTION

This policy highlights the key areas of Corporate Communication and Corporate Events for Humberside Fire and Rescue Service (HFRS) and provides all employees, agency staff and volunteers working on behalf of HFRS, awareness of the acceptable use of photography and filming, use of social media and legal requirements of using and retaining media content.

In context of this policy the term 'Corporate Communication' is defined as follows:
"A series of Service activities which involve managing and orchestrating internal and external communication."

The Corporate Communication and Corporate Events Delivery Plans detail how this policy forms part of the process to support the achievement of HFRS objectives as detailed in the respective Strategic and Corporate Tactical Plans.

Core Code Of Ethics

HFRS has adopted the Core Code of Ethics for Fire and Rescue Services. The Service is committed to the ethical principles of the Code and strives to apply them in all we do, therefore, those principles are reflected in this Policy.

National Guidance

Any National Guidance which has been adopted by HFRS, will be reflected in this Policy.

2. EQUALITY AND INCLUSION

HFRS has a legal responsibility under the Equality Act 2010, and a commitment, to ensure it does not discriminate either directly or indirectly in any of its functions and services nor in its treatment of staff, in relation to race, sex, disability, sexual orientation, age, pregnancy and maternity, religion and belief, gender reassignment or marriage and civil partnership. It also has a duty to make reasonable adjustments for disabled applicants, employees, and service users.

3. AIM/OBJECTIVES

- To make staff aware of the acceptable use of photography and filming.
- To set out the expectations and limitations for the use of social media.
- To make staff aware of statutory restraints imposed on the use of social media.
- To make staff aware of the legal requirements of clipping, cutting, and copying media content.

4. ASSOCIATED DOCUMENTS

- [Equality Impact Analysis](#)
- Legal References
 - Data Protection Act 2018
 - Data Protection, Privacy and Electronic Communications Regulations 2019
 - Copyright, Designs and Patent Act 1988
 - Civil Contingencies Act 2004
 - Communications Act 2003
 - Malicious Communications Act 1988
 - Defamation Act 2013
 - Protection from Harassment Act 1997
 - Public Sector Bodies (Websites and Mobile Applications) (No. 2) Accessibility Regulations 2018
- [Fire Standards: Communication and Engagement](#)
- [Data Protection Policy](#)
- [Internet, Email and Instant Messaging Policy](#)
- [Dignity at Work Policy \(anti Bullying and Harassment Procedure\)](#)
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- [Appendix F: Guidance Note: Public Auditors/Social Media Bloggers](#)
- National Guidance
National Operational Guidance - Warn, inform and advise people

5. COMMUNICATIONS ROLES

The Corporate Communication team and Corporate Events Officer are part of Corporate Assurance and manage the following areas: internal and external corporate communication, corporate campaigns, Prevention and Protection communication and campaigns, promotion of National Fire Chief's Council (NFCC) safety campaigns, branding guidelines, consultations, social media and website monitoring and editing, media enquiries and corporate events.

6. ACCEPTABLE USE OF PHOTOGRAPHY AND FILMING

The use of images of people, including photos and videos, for HFRS's own purposes may be used internally and externally on HFRS website, corporate social media accounts and in digital and printed communication.

Consent must be given by members of the public to be included in any photography and filming for HFRS's own purposes, both internally and externally, by completing a consent form. Where the image of a member of staff is captured, they are in uniform and performing their job, written consent is not needed. Staff should inform the team who are filming and taking photographs if they do not want their image to be used.

Related guidance on the acceptable use of photography and filming and storing them is provided in the [Acceptable Use of Photography and Filming Guidance Note](#).

STORAGE OF PHOTOGRAPHY AND FILMING

Completed consent forms should be kept as per the Service Retention Schedule as outlined in the Data Protection Policy.

Retention of images, including photos and videos, for HFRS's own purposes should be kept as per the Service Retention Schedule as outlined in the Data Protection Policy. This includes HFRS staff capturing images at incidents.

7. ACCEPTABLE USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA

Corporately, HFRS uses social media to raise awareness about its initiatives, campaigns, incidents, and general news in a responsible, professional, coordinated and consistent manner.

The Corporate Communication team manage all corporate HFRS social media accounts. Related guidance detailing the management of these profiles and associated guidelines on content is provided in the [Social Media Guidance Note](#).

The Corporate Communication team is aware of the increased rise of Public Auditors/Social Media Bloggers visiting public sector and emergency service locations. Further guidance for HFRS staff on how to respond is provided in [Public Auditors/Social Media Bloggers Guidance Note](#). HFRS staff should also refer to [Control of Contractors and Visitors Policy](#) for arrangements for visitors at Service locations.

PERSONAL USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA

Staff must be mindful of sharing and posting content on their own personal account across any social media platforms and also when using real-time instant messaging channels, such as WhatsApp, Facebook Messenger and Teams. Care must be taken when sharing / liking / commenting on opinions expressed by others, as well as content they post themselves, as others in the group, followers and members of the public may find the content offensive. Inappropriate or discriminatory content can lead to claims of unlawful harassment, discrimination and bullying.

Whilst phrases such as 'sharing does not necessarily mean endorsement' are often used on social media platforms, they offer little protection for staff from an HFRS point of view. Similarly, 'opinions are my own' does not lessen any offence caused

or damage to brand reputation.

Individuals may be subject to having their posts or social media activities reported to the respective platform by other users for further investigation.

Instant messaging channels and platforms, such as WhatsApp and Facebook, are designed to be easy to use and staff may find themselves in breach of policies without realising the impact of their behaviour. Related guidance on what the Service expects from staff in the online environment is provided in the [Social Media Guidance Note](#). Related guidance and information on inappropriate or discriminatory behaviour is provided in the [Dignity at Work Policy \(anti-Bullying and Harassment Procedure\)](#).

It is important to note that further guidance on the use of real-time instant messaging channels, such as WhatsApp, Facebook Messenger and Teams, and any others that allow for virtual and social connections is provided in the [Internet, Email and Instant Messaging Policy](#).

Data protection rules and obligations of confidentiality do not disappear when using systems and platforms like WhatsApp and Facebook. Chats on instant messaging systems may also be subject to Freedom of Information legislation and Subject Access Requests.

HFRS employees whose use of social media is in contravention of this policy may be subject to HFRS's Disciplinary procedure.

WHO CAN POST SOCIAL MEDIA CONTENT ON BEHALF OF HFRS?

The Corporate Communication team have the sole authority to grant and revoke access to corporate social media accounts as business needs dictate. As well as the authority, alongside Humberside Fire Authority Strategic Leadership Team (SLT) and Tactical Leadership Team (TLT), to request a suspension or restriction of posting on HFRS social media accounts.

HFRS has one corporate account on X/Twitter and Instagram which has multiple staff users.

HFRS has one official corporate account for Facebook that is managed by the Corporate Communication team and a Prevention Manager. On-Call fire stations have their own station accounts that are managed by the named fire station and approved by the Corporate Communication team.

HFRS has corporate accounts on LinkedIn, YouTube and TikTok that are managed by the Corporate Communication team.

No other HFRS social media accounts should be created by any member of staff without authorisation from the Corporate Communication team.

All staff must adhere to the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) legislation and the Data Protection Act 2018 when using social media as it involves the processing of personal data. For further information and guidance please refer to the Data Protection Policy.

8. COMMUNICATION DURING PRE-ELECTION PERIOD

The pre-election period (formally known as Purdah) is the term used to describe the period between the time an election is announced and the date the election is held. Civil servants are given official guidance by the Cabinet Office on the rules they must follow in relation to Government business during this time.

HFRS cannot favour a political party or PCC candidate. HFRS staff must be aware of the pre-election period in relation to Humberside Fire Authority, which is made up of Councillors from the Local Authorities in the Humber region.

HFRS staff must be aware that they and colleagues may be approached ahead of local elections to request a visit to HFRS locations and attendance at events, which could be used for a photo opportunity. HFRS staff must be mindful that inviting them to any events during the pre-election period could be perceived to be influencing their outcome in the election and could bring the organisation into disrepute.

Related guidance on what you can and cannot do during the pre-election period is provided in the [Pre-Election Guidance Note](#).

9. MEDIA ENQUIRIES

HFRS will respond positively to enquiries for information from members of the media, subject to legal and confidentiality restrictions.

Initial media enquiries are handled by Fire Service Control Room which operates 24/7. Requests for interviews or further information will be passed to the Corporate Communication team during office hours (Monday to Friday, 8am to 5pm).

Related guidance to make sure responses are handled legally and confidentially is provided in the [Media Enquiries Guidance Note](#).

10. MEDIA CUTTINGS AND CLIPPINGS

To protect HFRS from an infringement of copyright, no member of staff can copy and/or store any physical cuttings or digital clippings from newspapers and magazines in their place of work and/or store on their HFRS computer, phone or in filing systems.

WHAT IS CLASSED AS COPYING?

Copying can be anything from photocopying articles to scanning and emailing them to colleagues or external contacts as well as hosting articles on your shared drive or

intranet for others to view or, externally, on your corporate website and social media accounts.

This also includes printing out or emailing articles you receive from external sources, such as a PR or media watching agency, including in some cases Google Alerts, depending on the publisher. Sharing a weblink of news coverage is acceptable but if the headline and content is copied and pasted into an email or document this would be an infringement of copyright.

11. EVENTS

The Publicity & Events Officer organises corporate events, such as the Long Service and Good Conduct Ceremony and staff Recognition Awards. This includes HFRS participation in partner events and events open to members of the public as identified.

Other HFRS Directorates may be involved in planning and participating in their own local events and related guidance to considering and planning an event is provided in the [Events Guidance Note](#).

12. ACCESSIBILITY

HFRS wants to make all its information easy for everyone to understand. We do this by writing in clear and simple language, avoiding jargon and acronyms. This includes the HFRS website, as per the Public Sector Bodies (Websites and Mobile Applications) (No. 2) Accessibility Regulations 2018.

HFRS will also supply information in different formats when asked, such as:

- Accessible PDF
- Easy Read
- Large Print
- Audio - so people can listen to information (such as a CD or MP3)
- Braille - which is used by some people who are visually impaired
- Translated into another language on request

13. PROMOTION REQUESTS

HFRS is unable to communicate, internally or externally, any advertising materials and requests from businesses, including businesses owned by HFRS staff.

HFRS is an advocate of The Fire Fighters Charity and My Burns Club. In addition, HFRS will recognise and support staff with other charity events and fundraisers.

If you require any further guidance/information about this document, please contact the Corporate Communication team or Events Officer.

APPENDIX A: GUIDANCE NOTE: ACCEPTABLE USE OF PHOTOGRAPHY AND FILMING

INTRODUCTION

This Guidance Note highlights the responsibilities of all staff on the acceptable use of photography and filming while working for Humberside Fire and Rescue Service (HFRS).

INTERNAL USE

In the context of this Guidance Note and Corporate Communication and Events Policy, the term 'internal' is defined by activities, events and content that are for HFRS staff and will be shared within the organisation.

Where we record the image (photograph or video) of anyone, staff or public, those individuals must consent to their image being used in any publications, internal or external (see External Use).

However, where the image of a member of staff is captured, they are in uniform and performing their job, we do not need to have their written consent. Staff should withdraw if they do not want their image to be used.

EXTERNAL USE

In the context of this Guidance Note and Corporate Communication and Events Policy, the term 'external' is defined by activities, events and content that are from both HFRS and non HFRS locations and are to be published for anyone, staff or public to see.

HFRS staff attend public based events and activities. If staff take photographs and film, they must:

- Use a Service issued device (mobile phone, camera) to capture photos and film.
- Check with the event organiser and / or responsible person before attending to clarify and gain permission to take photographs and videos.
- Those recorded must be made aware of how, where and for what purpose their image may be used.
- Consent must be obtained before taking photos or filming groups and individual members of the public, by verbally asking members of the public and asking them to complete a consent form.
- Signs must be visible stating that filming and photography is being carried out during a HFRS event which is open to members of the public.

AT INCIDENTS

HFRS staff who are instructed by the Officer in Charge or as part of their role as Investigating Officer to capture photographs and film at an incident, must:

- Wherever possible, not capture images of individuals.
- Ensure that images of members of the public should only be captured where there is good reason and a lawful basis, for example being interviewed by a Fire Investigation Officer. (Images of staff in uniform, doing their job is acceptable.)
- Ensure that images which are intended to be used externally must have any associated information which may be aggregated to assist in the identification of an individual removed or masked. Such information includes street names, house numbers and names, vehicle registration numbers or other location information (northings and eastings, map references, coordinates).

USE OF THIRD-PARTY MATERIAL

Third party materials mean any materials and information, including documents, data, know-how, ideas, methodologies, specifications, software, content, and technology, in any form or media, in which any person or company other than HFRS owns any Intellectual Property Right and has not been created and labelled to use freely.

HFRS staff must be cautious when searching for materials to use internally and externally and must make sure they are categorised as 'free to use' and have no copyright. Failure to do this may result in HFRS and the employee being liable to pay fees for their use, even after they have been removed.

Some third-party materials may be free to use if the creator is credited in the document/publication.

More information about copyright can be found on the GOV.UK website [here](#).

STORAGE

Retention of photographs and film should be in accordance with the Service Retention Schedule as outlined in the Data Protection Policy. The length of time retention will vary dependent on the reason for having them and justification for keeping them. Once the reason for having them has gone, they should be disposed of.

Retention of images captured at incidents will be based on purpose and how they were captured. The Surveillance Camera Policy deals with the use of various CCTV cameras which HFRS operates, on buildings, fire service vehicles, drones and body-worn cameras. For all of these, except where the images need to be retained for training purposes, incident de-briefs, investigations and prosecutions, the retention period is 30 days.

APPENDIX B: GUIDANCE NOTE: SOCIAL MEDIA

INTRODUCTION

This Guidance Note highlights the responsibilities of all staff on the acceptable use of social media in a personal and corporate capacity whilst working for Humberside Fire and Rescue Service (HFRS).

CORPORATE USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA

HFRS staff must request access to corporate social media accounts by contacting the Corporate Communication team.

HFRS staff who have been given access to corporate social media accounts must receive social media training from the Corporate Communication team and positively portray HFRS in all social media posts.

No other HFRS social media accounts should be created by any member of staff without authorisation from the Corporate Communication team.

When composing a social media post about an event or incident we are attending, it is important to make sure that potentially sensitive or confidential information is removed from the text or photo, these include company names, house numbers, number plates and names or faces of casualties. Also avoid using Fire Service acronyms and words such as 'appliance', instead use 'fire engine'.

The Corporate Communication team has the sole authority to grant and revoke access to corporate social media accounts as business needs dictate. As well as the authority along with, Strategic Leadership Team (SLT) and Tactical Leadership Team (TLT), to request a suspension or restriction of posting on HFRS social media accounts.

PERSONAL USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA

HFRS staff identifying themselves as employees or volunteers working on behalf of HFRS must:

- Not engage in activities on the internet which might bring the organisation into disrepute or damage HFRS's reputation.
- Not breach any other HFRS policy (such as IT usage, staff code of conduct, Dignity at Work etc.).
- Not breach copyright or confidentiality clauses.
- Never use social media to intimidate, bully or in any way attack or abuse colleagues or members of the community.
- Not post derogatory or offensive comments on the internet.
- Not contradict the corporate message or stance on issues relating to the business of HFRS, for example safety messages, financial decisions or positive action etc.
- Not post sensitive or potentially sensitive information relating to HFRS.

This includes posting photographs or video footage taken at an incident, information about an operational response or any other information you may be exposed to within your employment.

- Act in a transparent manner.

Information on social media may be available for a long time after it is posted, even if the original post was removed. Inappropriate or discriminatory content can lead to claims of unlawful harassment, discrimination and bullying.

It is important to note that further guidance on the use of real-time instant messaging channels, such as WhatsApp, Facebook Messenger and Teams, and any others that allow for virtual and social connections is provided in the [Internet, Email and Instant Messaging Policy](#).

APPENDIX C: GUIDANCE NOTE: MEDIA ENQUIRIES

INTRODUCTION

This Guidance Note highlights the responsibilities of all staff to make sure media responses on behalf of Humberside Fire and Rescue Service (HFRS) are handled legally and confidentially.

INCIDENTS TAGGED AS ‘CONFIDENTIAL’

These will not appear on the incident feed on HFRS’ website, however, should enquiries be received for such incidents, the response must be “we attended an incident” and give the time, location and number of operational vehicles **ONLY**. Information about operational incidents must originate from the Officer in Charge subject to the constraints.

INFORMATION TO BE GIVEN TO THE MEDIA

- The supposed cause provided it has been identified beyond reasonable doubt (other than fatalities or possible fatalities).
- Time of call.
- Number and type of fire engines and vehicles attending.
- Methods used for any rescues.
- Measures taken to bring the incident under control or prevent the situation worsening.
- The time the incident was brought under control.
- Extent of damage in general terms only. No estimate of financial loss should be given. It is of course more important to say what has been saved.
- Avoid using fire service acronyms and terms that members of the public may not understand. Information given must be easily understood by all.

INFORMATION NOT TO BE GIVEN TO THE MEDIA

Under no circumstances should information concerning the following be given without permission from the Duty Principal Officer:

- Full address.
- The supposed cause of fire where it is not identified beyond reasonable doubt or where fatalities have occurred or may occur.
- Failure of water supplies or other services or delays in response.
- Where HFRS receives interference or criticism from the public, officials or organisations, or from any other source.
- Any matter which may be the subject of subsequent enquiry or litigation.
- Names of civilian or Fire Service casualties.
- Criticism of actions by occupiers/owners of property, or of design in construction of any particular property, or of processes carried out in connection with the property.

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- Any information concerning the location, size or nature of any explosive device.
- Details of suspected suicide attempt or helping an agency in the recovery of body.
- Details of a bariatric assistance/rescue.
- Details of a person(s) who have died at the incident as a result of a fire or otherwise. Information of this kind will be dealt with by the Police.

15. APPENDIX D: GUIDANCE NOTE: EVENTS

INTRODUCTION

This Guidance Note highlights the considerations and responsibilities of planning and preparing an event on behalf of and by HFRS staff.

CONSIDERATIONS

Events are a great tool to showcase what we do and engage with our communities and partners; however, they require a great deal of resource to come together and there is a reputational risk if things go wrong. Key areas to consider before planning an event are:

Why

- Does it fulfil actions in support of HFRS Strategic Plan and related planning documents?
- What do you want to achieve from this event?
- Will people attend?

Timing

- Will it clash with other HFRS and local events?
- How long is there to plan and advertise the event.

Resources

- Do you have an agreed budget?
- Have you considered other funding opportunities (grants, sponsorship). Are there terms and conditions to be aware of?
- Lead times when ordering materials for the event?

RESPONSIBILITIES

Partnerships and contracts

These include venue contracts and equipment contractors to run the event. Involving other organisations, including charities and not for profit groups, will require a partnership agreement before planning begins.

Risk assessments

All internal and external events must have a risk assessment and follow guidance from Health, Safety and Environment team.

APPENDIX E: GUIDANCE NOTE: PRE-ELECTION GUIDANCE NOTE

INTRODUCTION

This Guidance Note highlights the considerations and responsibilities of all staff during a pre-election period.

WHAT IS THE PRE-ELECTION PERIOD?

The pre-election period (formally known as purdah) is the term used to describe the period between the time an election is announced and the date the election is held. Civil servants are given official guidance by the Cabinet Office on the rules they must follow in relation to Government business during this time.

IS THIS DIFFERENT TO 'HEIGHTENED SENSITIVITY'?

No, this term has been used more recently to describe the pre-election period and should be treated the same way.

WHY IS IT NO LONGER KNOWN AS PURDAH?

It is an outdated term that has been replaced by 'pre-election period', this is due to the origins of the term (purdah) relating to female oppression in some Muslim and Hindu communities.

HOW DOES IT EFFECT HFRS?

All staff must be aware of the pre-election period in relation to our Fire Authority, which is made up of Councillors and as well as locally held PCC elections. We must be mindful that inviting them to any events during this period could be seen to be influencing their outcome in the election.

Managers need to be aware that they and their teams may be approached by those ahead of local elections to visit our locations or events, which could be used for a photo opportunity.

HFRS cannot favour a political party or PCC candidate and therefore the previous actions could bring the organisation into disrepute.

ADVICE FROM THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION

Publicity is defined as "any communication, in whatever form, addressed to the public at large or to a section of the public."

The first question to ask is: 'could a reasonable person conclude that you were spending public money to influence the outcome of the election?' In other words, it must pass the '**is it reasonable**' test. When making your decision, you should consider the following:

WHAT YOU SHOULD NOT DO

- Produce publicity on matters which are politically controversial
- Make references to individual politicians or groups in press releases
- Arrange proactive media or events involving candidates
- Issue photographs which include candidates
- Supply photographs or other materials to councillors or political group staff unless you have verified that they will not be used for campaigning purposes
- Continue hosting third party blogs or e-communication
- Help with national political visits, as this would involve using public money to support a candidate or party. These should be organised by political parties with no cost or resource implications for the organisation.

WHAT YOU NEED TO THINK CAREFULLY ABOUT

You should think carefully before you:

- Continue to run campaign material to support your own local campaigns. If the campaign is already running and is non-controversial for example, on issues like recycling or foster care and would be a waste of public money to cancel or postpone them, then continue. However, you should always think carefully if a campaign could be deemed likely to influence the outcome of the election and you should not use councillors in press releases and events in pre-election periods. In such cases you should stop or defer them. An example might be a campaign on an issue which has been subject of local political debate and/or disagreement.
- Launch any new consultations. Unless it is a statutory duty, don't start any new consultations or publish report findings from consultation exercises, which could be politically sensitive.

WHAT YOU ARE ALLOWED TO DO

- Publish factual information to counteract misleading, controversial or extreme, for example, racist/sexist information. It is perfectly right and proper that the organisation responds if it is factual.
- Use relevant managers rather than members of the Fire Authority for reactive media releases.
- Use a Councillor who is involved in an election when the Fire Authority is required to respond in circumstances, such as in an emergency or where there is a genuine need for a member-level response to an important event beyond the organisation's control. If the issue is so serious, it is worth considering asking the Fire Authority to agree to a response which would involve all of them.
- If you are in any doubt, seek advice from the Corporate Assurance team.
- Ultimately, you must always be guided by the principle of fairness. It is crucial that any decision you take would be seen as fair and reasonably the public and those standing for office.

APPENDIX F: GUIDANCE NOTE: PUBLIC AUDITORS/SOCIAL MEDIA BLOGGERS

The purpose of this guidance is to assist Humberside Fire and Rescue staff to conduct themselves accordingly with our Core Code of Ethics when interacting with self-proclaimed Public Auditors and Social Media Bloggers, if they arrive at Service locations such as a fire station and Service Headquarters.

Who are Public Auditors/Social Media Bloggers?

The Auditors/Bloggers are members of the public and social media users who arrive unannounced to film public locations, notably emergency services locations. They will be filming upon arrival and around the station, often using a handheld tripod and/or microphone, and claiming to be exercising their right to film and giving no further justification.

They should not be confused with hostile reconnaissance which by its nature is covert. Their aim is likes and follows on social media to be able to monetise their videos.

What will they do?

You may encounter someone filming in and around HFRS locations. They will say they are “just looking around,” and that they “film public buildings,” and they will present themselves as members of the public, but with a camera. If they are challenged, or we refuse to let them in/ask them to turn the camera off, the way this is done can itself become the main focus of their recording. We strongly recommend that you do not take this approach.

Some of them will want controversy, confrontation, defensiveness of tone or body language. They will anticipate that the stronger the reaction from you, the more interest will be generated, so they may attempt to provoke you and turn this into a success for them.

What should staff do?

We know it is natural to feel uncomfortable and unnatural being filmed, especially when the intentions are unclear. Nonetheless, be respectful and polite. Ignore the camera and converse as you would normally with a member of the public at a community event or station open day.

Be mindful of your reaction and tone and try to be professional and helpful.

If you have time: explain we are happy to welcome visitors but, with commitments such as training and visits, we can only give them a maximum of 10-15 minutes as it is not simply a matter of giving them free access. We also need to be sure they don't get hurt or delay us if we are called to an incident and the crew need to leave immediately. Showcase our vehicles and equipment in the appliance room and/or grounds to enable a quick evacuation of the building. This response will go a long way to avoiding any conflict.

If you do not have time: calmly explain that you have prior commitments and that it is not safe for people to be on station unsupervised whilst staff are working to keep the Humber region safe. You can suggest that the visit is arranged for another time, in line with the Service's [Control of Contractors and Visitors Policy](#).

What if it becomes confrontational?

If the Public Auditor/Social Media Blogger appears or becomes unwilling to co-operate or tries to enter parts of the site you don't feel is appropriate, there are ways to manage this.

Explain that there are some parts of our work and station that we need to keep private, such as staff rest areas.

If you sense the interaction is deteriorating, they are pushing too hard or that they are looking for conflict, take a slightly firmer tone and be prepared to repeat it a few times:

"It's great that you're interested in our work, but I think we've achieved all we can today, so we need you to leave now, please."

You may need to repeat this a few times which may feel awkward and unnatural, but it will not benefit their viewing figures and ultimately that's why they are visiting, so should prompt them to leave.

Offer another visit at another date and time, as long as they arrange it in advance. They are however unlikely to book in advance as the concept of auditing is to try and catch the emergency service unannounced and see how staff react.

What if we get a visit?

Please let the Corporate Communication team know, through email <mailto:corporatecommunication@humbersidefire.gov.uk>, phone call or via Control.

Please make sure you review the [Control of Contractors and Visitors Policy](#) to ensure HFRS personnel, locations and assets are protected from unauthorised access, damage and interference.