

SUBJECT:	WHISTLEBLOWING POLICY AND GUIDANCE
DIRECTORATE:	CHIEF EXECUTIVE AND TOWN CLERK
REPORT AUTHOR:	AMANDA STANISLAWSKI, AUDIT MANAGER

1. Purpose of Report

1.1 To update the Whistleblowing policy and guidance.

2. Background

2.1 The Council's whistleblowing policy is part of range of counter fraud policies which are reviewed every two years (or sooner if required). The policy was last reviewed in March 2020 where there was little change made. There has been a slight delay in reviewing the policy this year due to staff capacity.

2.2 A Whistleblower is generally a term used for a person who works in or for an organisation and raises an honest and reasonable concern about a possible fraud, crime, danger or other serious risk that could threaten colleagues, service users, customers, members of the public or the success and reputation of the organisation.

2.3 UK law protects employees from dismissal, harassment or victimisation if such treatment occurs as a result of having made a whistle-blowing disclosure considered to be in the public interest. If workers bring information about a wrongdoing to the attention of their employers or a relevant organisation, they are protected in certain circumstances under the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998. This is commonly referred to as '*blowing the whistle*'. The law that protects whistleblowers is for the public interest - so people can speak out if they find malpractice in an organisation. Blowing the whistle is more formally known as '*making a disclosure in the public interest*'.

3. Policy and Guidance

3.1 The Council's current whistleblowing policy has been updated to correct paragraph numbering, reflect changes in personnel and other external links. There have been no material changes to the content.

3.2 A copy of the policy and guidance is attached at Appendix A with the changes marked.

4. Organisational Impacts

4.1 Finance – There are no direct financial implications arising as a result of this report.

4.2 Legal Implications including Procurement Rules – There are no direct legal implications arising as a result of this report; however the policy helps ensure compliance with UK law.

4.3 Equality, Diversity and Human Rights

The Public Sector Equality Duty means that the Council must consider all individuals when carrying out their day-to-day work, in shaping policy, delivering services and in relation to their own employees.

It requires that public bodies have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination
- Advance equality of opportunity
- Foster good relations between different people when carrying out their activities.

Due to the nature of the report, no specific Equality Impact Analysis is required.

5. Recommendation

5.1 Audit Committee are asked to approve the updated policy and guidance.

Key Decision No

Do the Exempt Information Categories Apply? No

Call in and Urgency: **Is the decision one to which Rule 15 of the Scrutiny Procedure Rules apply?** No

How many appendices does the report contain? One

List of Background Papers: None

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