
**REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF GOVERNANCE AND LEGAL
SERVICES AND MONITORING OFFICER**

WHISTLEBLOWING REPORTS 2018-2019

Appendix 1 & 2 of this report is exempt information and is not for publication as it contains exempt information of the description in paragraph 13 (information likely to reveal the identity of an individual) and paragraph 14 (information relating to financial or business affairs) of Part 4 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972. It is considered that the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information, having regard to the duty of confidence owed by the Council to its employees and the protection of personal data under the Data Protection Act 1998, and the potential prejudice to the Council of disclosing financial control information which may be fraudulently exploited.

Reason for this Report

1. To provide the Committee with information to enable it to oversee and monitor the Council's whistleblowing procedures and to consider any ethical issues arising.

Background

2. The Standards & Ethics Committee has responsibility to 'oversee and monitor the Council's Whistleblowing procedures and to consider ethical issues arising' (paragraph (e) of the Committee's terms of reference).
3. The Whistleblowing Policy sets out the arrangements adopted by the Council aimed at ensuring that workers are able to raise concerns in the public interest about a danger, risk, malpractice or wrongdoing within the Council without fear of adverse consequences. The Policy explains the statutory protection available to workers under the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998, and is intended to encourage and enable workers to raise serious concerns within the Council rather than overlooking a problem or blowing the whistle outside.
4. The Whistleblowing Policy was revised and approved by Cabinet in October 2014 on the recommendations of this Committee, to reflect legislative

changes, clarify certain provisions and adopt best practice. The Policy is publicised through posters in all core Council buildings, and articles in the Core Brief, an information bulletin disseminated to all staff; and guidance for staff and managers is published on the Council's intranet.

5. Under the Policy, the Monitoring Officer is required to keep a record of all reports made and their outcomes and to report periodically to the Standards Committee. At its meeting in March 2018, the Committee considered a report on whistleblowing reports made during 2017, with brief details of the concerns raised and outcome in each case.

Issues

6. The number of whistleblowing reports notified to the Monitoring Officer during 2018 and 2019, along with comparative numbers for the two previous years, is set out below:

YEAR	NUMBER OF WHISTLEBLOWING REPORTS
2016	4
2017	3
2018	1
2019	6

7. Further information on the concerns raised and the outcomes in each case is attached as Appendix A & B.
8. The Committee is invited to note the contents of this report and further information provided at the meeting, and make any observations considered appropriate.
9. Members are also invited to note that a review of the Whistleblowing Policy is being programmed for 2020/21 and will be reported to Committee this year.

Legal Implications

10. The legal implications are contained within the body of the report.

Financial Implications

11. There are no direct financial implications resulting from this report.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee is recommended to note the information provided and make any observations as appropriate.

Davina Fiore
Director of Governance and Legal Services and Monitoring Officer
12 March 2020

The following Background Papers have been taken into account:

Report of Monitoring Officer to the Standards & Ethics Committee - 'Whistleblowing Reports 2017'
March 2018