

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

WHISTLEBLOWING REPORTS 2020

**APPENDIX A IS EXEMPT FROM PUBLICATION PURSUANT TO THE
LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972, SCHEDULE 12A, PART 4
PARAGRAPHS 13 & 14**

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 approved by Cabinet in October 2014 on the recommendations of this Committee. The Policy is publicised through posters in all core Council buildings 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 as necessary to the Standards Committee. At its meeting in September 2020, the Committee considered a report on whistleblowing reports made during 2018 and 2019, 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 2020, along with comparative numbers for previous years, is set out below:

YEAR	NUMBER OF WHISTLEBLOWING REPORTS
2016	4
2017	3
2018	1
2019	6
2020	2

7. Further information on the concerns raised and the outcomes in each case are set out in **Appendix A (Exempt from publication)**.
8. A review of the Whistleblowing Policy was due to be undertaken in 2020/21, but has been delayed in consultation with colleagues in Internal Audit, who are currently reviewing the Council's whistleblowing arrangements. Any recommendations from the Internal Audit review will be addressed in the review of the Policy, and the Committee is invited to receive a further report on this matter in Spring 2022.
9. The Committee is invited to note the contents of this report, and make any observations considered appropriate.

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
29 September 2021

Appendices

Appendix A – Whistleblowing Reports 2020 – **EXEMPT FROM PUBLICATION**

Background papers

Report of Monitoring Officer to the Standards & Ethics Committee - 'Whistleblowing Reports 2018-19'
September 2020