

Whistle Blowing

Staff Guidance

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1. Introduction

This document has been produced as a short guide to the Council's [Whistleblowing Policy](#) and procedures. If you want more information you should refer to the full Policy which can be viewed on the Intranet or speak to your line manager, Human Resources Advisor, a Whistleblowing Officer or Trade Union representative.

Most employees will never be faced with the difficult decision of speaking up or reporting a serious wrongdoing at work but if you do find yourself in this situation, you should be aware that the Council has procedures in place to protect you. This is, in fact a requirement of the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998.

2. What is Whistleblowing

Whistleblowing is the term used to describe a disclosure by a worker, i.e. employees, casual workers, agency staff, contractors or volunteers, of malpractice as well as illegal acts or omission at work.

3. What is the Council's attitude to malpractice in the workplace?

The Whistleblowing Policy's aim is to cover concerns which fall outside the scope of other employment procedures **and** are in the public interest. For example, if you have a grievance relating to your employment, you should use the Council's Grievance Procedure. If you are concerned about bullying or harassment in work, you should use the Council's [Behavioural Standard's Guidance](#). You are encouraged to 'blow the whistle' if you believe malpractice has taken place in any of the following areas:

- Criminal offences
- Breach of legal obligation
- Miscarriage of justice
- Danger of the health and safety of an individual
- Damage to the environment
- Deliberate concealing of information about any of the above.

You should read the Policy in conjunction with the [Officer's Code of Conduct](#) and any departmental procedures for investigating concerns.

4. How will I be protected if I “blow the whistle”?

The Whistleblowing Policy allows you to express your concerns in confidence and without fear of victimisation, subsequent discrimination or disadvantage.

5. Why should I Whistleblow?

We take any malpractice within the Council very seriously and if you have serious concerns about any aspect of the Council’s work then you are encouraged and expected to come forward and voice those concerns.

You will be dealt with promptly and properly. By doing so, you could be protecting your colleagues, the public and others, whilst ensuring that the Council is aware of the problem and can deal with it.

6. Who can I go to if I have a serious concern?

You should not approach or accuse individuals directly or attempt to investigate the matter yourself. You should raise your concerns with a Whistleblowing Officer or other contacts named in the Policy.

7. Can I report my concern anonymously?

You can raise concerns anonymously, but they are less powerful and will be considered at the discretion of the Monitoring Officer.

Remember the Whistleblowing Policy is there to protect you and help you raise your concerns with confidence.

8. What happens after I have reported my concerns?

You will be given as much feedback as possible on how the matter is being dealt with usually by the person you reported your concern. Subject to data protection and confidentiality.

9. What happens if I am still not happy with the Council’s response?

The Policy's aim is to give you a way to raise your concerns within the Council and we hope that you are satisfied with how it is dealt with. However, if you are not satisfied then you are welcome to contact the Council's Chief Executive, or the Independent Chair of the Standards Committee or external contact points as described in the Policy.

The Whistle Blowing Policy recognises the Council's duty to provide support for employees and workers who find themselves in these difficult circumstances. There are other support mechanisms in place such as [Behavioural Standard's Guidance](#), [Grievance Policy](#), [Managing Stress and Mental Health in the Workplace policies](#) or the [Occupational Health and Wellbeing Services](#).

Please see the intranet or contact your Trade Union Representative or Human Resources Team on 01267 246129 for further information.