

CONFIDENTIAL REPORTING POLICY (WHISTLEBLOWING)	
Background	<p>Whistleblowing is the term used when a worker passes on information concerning wrongdoing. The wrongdoing will typically (although not necessarily) be something they have witnessed at work.</p> <p>To be covered by whistleblowing law, a worker who makes a disclosure must reasonably believe two things. The first is that they are acting in the public interest. The second is that they must reasonably believe that the disclosure tends to show past, present or likely future wrongdoing.</p> <p>The overall aim of our policy is to encourage employees who have serious concerns about any aspect of the Council's work, to come forward and voice those concerns.</p> <p>The Confidential Reporting Policy (Whistleblowing) was last reviewed in 2012. Since then, there have been legislative changes including the introduction of the Enterprise and Regulatory Reform Act 2013.</p> <p>Benchmarking against a number of other Local Authorities, along with general research into best practice has been carried out.</p> <p>The policy requires to be updated to take account of the legislative changes as well as incorporating other amendments to improve its effectiveness within the workplace.</p>
Findings	<p>The Confidential Reporting Policy (Whistleblowing) is in the early stages of its review, suggested amendments/additions include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Amend the title to Whistleblowing Policy ensuring its purpose is explicit • Make a clear distinction between whistleblowing and a complaint • Improve navigation and accessibility (e.g. add in contents page, hyperlinks) • Amend the language to take a softer approach and place greater focus on encouraging reporting • Add in reference to the Bullying & Harassment policy <p>It is therefore recommended that a low level review of the Confidential Reporting Policy (Whistleblowing) is completed.</p>
Implications	<p>The above changes would enhance its use, application and effectiveness in supporting employees to report serious concerns about any aspect of the Council's work.</p>
Summary	<p>In order to move forward with reviewing the Whistleblowing Policy, the Personnel Forum are asked to consider the suggested amendments/additions above.</p>