

REPORT TO AUDIT AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

Date of Meeting: 11 March 2020

Report of: AUDIT MANAGER

Title: Review and Update of Whistleblowing Policy

Is this a Key Decision?

No

Is this an Executive or Council Function? Council

1. What is the report about?

This committee has responsibility for approval of the Council's Whistleblowing Policy which is reviewed bi-annually.

2. Recommendations:

To approve the updated Whistleblowing Policy at Appendix A dated October 2019.

3. Reasons for the recommendation:

The Council's Whistleblowing Policy needs to be reviewed every two years to ensure that it is up to date and remains fit for purpose.

4. What are the resource implications including non financial resources.

None.

5. Section 151 Officer comments:

This is an important document to provide support and protection for whistleblowers. There are no areas of concern for the section 151 Officer.

6. What are the legal aspects?

See below

7. Monitoring Officer's comments:

Exeter City Council is committed to maintaining high standards of conduct and good practice and therefore the Monitoring officer is very supporting of this important policy. It is important for members to note that in accordance with the Employment Rights Act 1996, an employee who makes a protected disclosure, in good faith and in the public interest, will receive protection from being dismissed or victimised.

8. Report details:

The Council's Whistleblowing Policy was due for review in October 2019 and, following a conversation with the Council's Monitoring Officer it was agreed to review

the policy with a view to making it more user friendly in order to further encourage staff to raise any concerns that they may have.

Once approved, the updated policy will be communicated to all staff and councillors via the Council's policy management software.

A copy of the updated policy is included at Appendix A.

9. How does the decision contribute to the Council's Corporate Plan?

Good governance contributes to the Council's purpose of a "Well Run Council".

10. What risks are there and how can they be reduced?

None.

11. Equality Act 2010 (The Act)

11.1 Under the Act's Public Sector Equalities Duty, decision makers are required to consider the need to:

- eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other prohibited conduct;
- advance equality by encouraging participation, removing disadvantage, taking account of disabilities and meeting people's needs; and
- foster good relations between people by tackling prejudice and promoting understanding.

11.2 In order to comply with the general duty authorities must assess the impact on equality of decisions, policies and practices. These duties do not prevent the authority from reducing services where necessary, but they offer a way of developing proposals that consider the impacts on all members of the community.

11.3 In making decisions the authority must take into account the potential impact of that decision in relation to age, disability, race/ethnicity (includes Gypsies and Travellers), sex and gender, gender identity, religion and belief, sexual orientation, pregnant women and new and breastfeeding mothers, marriage and civil partnership status in coming to a decision.

11.4 In recommending this proposal no potential impact has been identified on people with protected characteristics as determined by the Act.

12. Carbon Footprint (Environmental) Implications:

No direct carbon/environmental impacts arising from the recommendations.

13. Are there any other options?

No

Director

Dave Hodgson

Chief Finance Officer

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Audit Managers

Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1972 (as amended)
Background papers used in compiling this report:-

None

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