

## **REPORT TO AUDIT AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE**

Date of Meeting: 27 July 2022

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?**

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

### **2. Recommendations:**

2.1 To approve the updated Whistleblowing Policy at Appendix A dated April 2022.

### **3. Reasons for the recommendation:**

3.1 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.**

4.1 None.

### **5. Section 151 Officer comments:**

5.1 There are no significant issues to raise to the Committee in respect of this report.

### **6. What are the legal aspects?**

6.1 None identified.

### **7. Monitoring Officer's comments:**

7.1 Whistleblowing is said to be one of the most effective ways to detect and prevent corruption and malpractice. Protecting whist blowers from unfair treatment, including retaliations, discrimination or disadvantage can help people report wrong doing and increase the likelihood that wrong doing is uncovered.

### **8. Report details:**

8.1 The Council's Whistleblowing Policy was reviewed and some minor amendments made in April 2022, details as follows:

- Section 1.5 – change of word to encourage reporting. It was felt that previous wording did not do this.
- Section 7 Independent Advice – update of the name and contract details of Public Concern at Work now to be known as Protect.

Once approved by this Committee, 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?**

9.1 Good governance contributes to the Council’s purpose of a “Well Run Council”.

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

10.1 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 because: because

11.4.1 The report is for information only

## **12. Carbon Footprint (Environmental) Implications:**

12.3 There are no direct carbon/environmental impacts arising from the recommendations.

### **13. Are there any other options?**

13.1 None.

#### **Director of Finance**

Dave Hodgson

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### **Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1972 (as amended)**

Background papers used in compiling this report:-

None

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