

Standards Committee – 13th October 2011

Report of the Monitoring Officer

Confidential Reporting Policy

Purpose of Report

1. To monitor the operation of the Council's Confidential Reporting Policy.

Background

2. Within its terms of reference the Standards Committee is responsible for advising the Council on its confidential reporting (i.e. whistle-blowing) policy and monitoring its operation.
3. The Policy was first introduced in July 1999 and was last updated in October 2010. A copy of the current policy is attached at Appendix 1.
4. In my capacity as Monitoring Officer I regularly monitor the Policy by surveying each directorate and asking a number of standard questions. The latest survey was undertaken during the Summer of 2011 and the results are set out below.

What is the outcome of your directorate's review of the policy?

5. Each directorate has reviewed the Policy and some minor updating has been made to paragraph 7.5 of the Policy, replacing Richard Carter with Andrea Pope-Smith.

Are you aware of any use of the Policy by your staff and, if so, please supply appropriate details?

6. There have been two issues raised in Children's Services Directorate which were referred to their designated officer during 2011/12. In both cases they were investigated. There were insufficient grounds for any further action to be taken in both cases. However, the matters reported will be monitored.
7. The Directorate of Corporate Resources received five allegations of fraud/irregularity from members of the public, which have been investigated by Internal Audit.
8. The Directorate of Adult Community and Housing Services have had three incidents during the last 12 months in relation to employees reporting incidents in connection with work particularly around theft / misuse of council equipment / misuse of council time. This has resulted in disciplinary investigations in all three cases.

How are your staff reminded of the existence of the policy e.g. newsletters and briefings?

9. Generally directorates make use of briefings, newsletters, management meetings, team briefings, posters and leaflets.

Are there regular checks of posters and leaflets to make sure that they are up to date and readily available?

10. All directorates report that regular (i.e. at least annually) checks do take place and any missing or out-dated posters are replaced.

Finance

11. There are no financial implications arising from this report.

Law


12. The relevant legislation is contained in the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998 which affords some statutory protection for whistle-blowers.

Equality Impact

13. This report takes into account the Council's policy on equality and diversity.

Recommendation

14. It is recommended that the Committee note the outcome of the recent monitoring of the Confidential Reporting Policy.



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Monitoring Officer

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List of Background Papers

Various emails from Directorates