

Report To: Corporate Governance Committee

Date of Meeting: 29th November 2017

Lead Member / Officer: Monitoring Officer

Report Author: Gary Williams

Title: **Whistleblowing Policy – Annual Report**

1. What is the report about?

This report is about the operation of the Council's Whistleblowing Policy since the last annual report in July 2016.

2. What is the reason for making this report?

This report is submitted in accordance with the Council's Whistleblowing Policy which contains a requirement that the Monitoring Officer bring a report to this Committee at least once a year on the operation of the Policy and any changes in practice introduced as a result of concerns raised under the Policy.

3. What are the Recommendations?

That the Committee consider and comment upon the information provided in this report.

4. Report details

In April 2016 Council approved an updated and amended Whistleblowing Policy. As with the previous policy there is a requirement for the Monitoring Officer to report once each year to the Corporate Governance Committee on the operation of the Policy.

Following the adoption of the Policy, there was an awareness raising exercise. The policy was placed on the intranet in the summer of 2016 and it was then communicated via the Chief Executive 's message. Officers attended the schools cluster meeting to talk about the policy and the changes that had been made. A standard presentation on whistleblowing was created to ensure a consistent message was given. This presentation was also put on the intranet. Business Partners and Specialists attended service departmental management meetings over the summer to take them through the changes in the policy and raise awareness. In March 2017 SLT agreed that the 'whistleblowing e-learning module' would be mandatory for all new starters to Denbighshire and existing employees also. The platform which hosts the modules is still being finalised and hopefully will be ready to launch in January 2018. It will be possible to report on completion rates for this module also. HR are looking at having a spotlight feature on the intranet which will focus on one policy per month in order to

highlight a new policy or changes made to a policy but also for general awareness of policies. The Whistleblowing Policy will be one of these.

The last report to the Committee was made in July 2016 and covered the period from 1st April 2015 to 13th July 2016. During that period there had been two concerns raised under the Policy.

This report covers the period from 14th July to date.

In the period covered by this report there have been no concerns raised under the Policy.

5. How does the decision contribute to the Corporate Priorities?

Robust whistleblowing arrangements support good governance throughout the Council which in turn enables effective delivery of priorities.

6. What will it cost and how will it affect other services?

There are no direct costs associated with this report.

7. What are the main conclusions of the Well-being Impact Assessment?

There is no requirement for an assessment in respect of this report.

8. What consultations have been carried out with Scrutiny and others?

There have been no consultations in respect of this report.

9. Chief Finance Officer Statement

Robust whistleblowing arrangements help to support good governance throughout the Council.

10. What risks are there and is there anything we can do to reduce them?

In the absence of a robust and effective Whistleblowing Policy and Procedure with which employees and third parties engaging with the Council are familiar, there is a risk that concerns about malpractice will not come to the attention of the Council. It is essential that employees understand that they will be protected if they raise a concern in the reasonable belief that their report is made in the public interest.

11. Power to make the Decision

No decision is required.