

Report to	Governance and Audit Committee
Date of meeting	25 th September 2024
Lead Member / Officer	Gary Williams, Monitoring Officer
Report author	Gary Williams, Monitoring Officer
Title	Annual Report – Whistleblowing Policy

1. What is the report about?

1.1. This report is about the operation of the Council's Whistleblowing Policy since the last annual report to Committee on 20th September 2023.

2. What is the reason for making this report?

2.1. This report is submitted in accordance with the Council's Whistleblowing Policy which contains a requirement that the Monitoring Officer bring an annual report to this Committee 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?

3.1. That the Committee considers and comments upon the information provided in this report.

4. Report details

4.1. 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. The Policy was last reviewed in October 2023. A copy of the Policy is attached as Appendix 1 to this report.

- 4.2. The last report to the Committee was made in September 2023. That report covered the period 1st January 2021 to 30th April 2023. During that reporting period there had been six new concerns raised.
- 4.3. This report covers the period 1st May 2023 to 30th April 2024. During this period there have been five new concerns raised, two of which are related.
- 4.4. The attached Appendix 2 contains an anonymised summary of the concerns that have been raised during this period as well as the outcome of the concern that was referred to in the last annual report but which had not at that time been resolved. Further information can be provided to the committee at the meeting.

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

- 5.1. 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?

- 6.1. There are no direct costs associated with this report.

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

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

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

- 8.1. There have been no consultations in respect of this report.

9. Chief Finance Officer Statement

- 9.1. Although there are no direct financial implications of this report robust whistleblowing arrangements do help to support good governance throughout the Council.

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

- 10.1. 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

- 11.1. No decision is required