

<b>Report to</b>	Governance and Audit Committee
<b>Date of meeting</b>	20 <sup>th</sup> September 2023
<b>Lead Member / Officer</b>	Gary Williams, Monitoring Officer
<b>Report author</b>	Gary Williams, Monitoring Officer
<b>Title</b>	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.

## **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 refreshed and reformatted in 2018. A copy of the Policy is attached as Appendix 1 to this report.

4.2. The last report to the Committee was made in January 2021. That report covered a two-year period ending on 31st December 2020. During that reporting period there had been six new concerns raised.

4.3. This report covers the period 1<sup>st</sup> January 2021 to 30<sup>th</sup> April 2023. During this period there have also been six new concerns raised.

4.4. The attached Appendix 2 contains an anonymised summary of the concerns that have been raised during this period. 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