



WHISTLEBLOWING POLICY AND PROCEDURE

Re-adopted 13th May 2024 – Minute no 0207/24

1. Policy

The Council believes that all employees are entitled to work in an environment free from fear and oppression.

The Council wishes to encourage any employee, regardless of their role or position in the organisation, to speak out where they believe there may be fraud, malpractice or illegal activities occurring. Examples may be theft of Council property or cash, harassment of other staff, accepting substantial gifts for favouring external contractors etc.

2. Procedure

(a) Reporting Procedure:

If an employee identifies that fraud, malpractice or illegal activities are taking place then they must raise their concerns with the Clerk.

If it is not appropriate to refer the matter to this Officer, then it should be raised with either the Chair of the Council, or a trade union representative.

Where the trade union is approached, then it will be the responsibility of the representative to report the matter to the relevant Officer. If an employee has any firm evidence of their concerns, this should also be brought to the attention of the person to whom the matter is reported.

(b) Confidentiality:

Every effort will be made to protect confidentiality and to deal with complaints in a sympathetic and sensitive manner with understanding and support.

(c) Supporting Advice:

Where appropriate, internal and external advice and assistance will be obtained to follow up a complaint. This may involve Audit, Legal and/or the Police. Where practicable, steps will be taken to preserve confidentiality and the safety of complainant/s from possible reprisals.

3: Reprisals/Victimisation

In circumstances where intimidation, victimisation or reprisals takes place towards an employee who has raised concerns, then this will be treated as Gross Misconduct under the Disciplinary rules.

4: Unfounded and Malicious Complaints

In circumstances following an investigation into a complaint which, in the reasonable opinion of the Investigating Officer, shows the complainant made to be; frivolous, deliberately or recklessly unfounded, or a malicious allegation, then they will be subject to a Disciplinary Hearing that the complaint was motivated by malice. This will normally be treated as Gross Misconduct, and the complainant will be dismissed.

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