

STANDARDS COMMITTEE

Raising Concerns (formerly Whistleblowing) Policy 22nd January 2015

Report of the Monitoring Officer

PURPOSE OF REPORT

To enable the Committee to consider minor revisions to the Raising Concerns Policy, and to note that no disclosures have been made under the policy since its review in October 2012.

This report is public

RECOMMENDATIONS

- (1) **That the revised Raising Concerns Policy appended to this report be approved, and that it be noted that no disclosures have been made under the policy since the last report in October 2012.**

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 The Raising Concerns (formerly Whistleblowing) Policy was revised and approved in October 2012. Approval of the policy falls within the terms of reference of this Committee.
- 1.2 In June 2013, the Enterprise and Regulatory Reform Act 2013 made some amendments to the Employment Rights Act 1996. In particular, the amendments provide that a disclosure no longer has to be made in good faith to be protected under the legislation, but that a disclosure will only be protected if it is, in the reasonable belief of the worker making the disclosure, "in the public interest".
- 1.3 Some minor textual amendments have been made to the Council's policy to take account of these amendments. The opportunity has also been taken to update the job titles of officers referred to in the Policy. The revised policy is appended to this report, and the amendments have been tracked for ease of reference.
- 1.4 No disclosures have been made under the policy since the previous report to this Committee in October 2012.
- 1.5 When no concerns are raised under the policy it is always difficult to assess whether this is because there are no concerns, or because employees do not know how to raise concerns or are reluctant to do so. Information about the Policy was circulated to all officers in late 2012. Since early 2013, the policy has been referred to in the corporate induction process, and it will also be included in the management and employee development programme which is being prepared for the next twelve months. Following this meeting, Chief Officers will be asked to ensure that all managers are aware of the policy and the "frequently asked questions" on the intranet, and that the information is cascaded to all staff. A copy of this report has also been sent to trade union

representatives.

2.0 Conclusion

2.1 The Committee is recommended to approve the attached revisions to the policy.

CONCLUSION OF IMPACT ASSESSMENT (including Diversity, Human Rights, Community Safety, Sustainability and Rural Proofing)

None directly arising from this report.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no direct legal implications arising from this report.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no direct financial implications arising from this report.

OTHER RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

Human Resources:

Human Resources are responsible for including the policy within the induction process, and for ensuring that managers understand their role and responsibilities under the policy.

Information Services:

None

Property:

None

Open Spaces:

None

SECTION 151 OFFICER'S COMMENTS

The Section 151 Officer has been consulted and has no further comments.

MONITORING OFFICER'S COMMENTS

The report has been prepared by the Monitoring Officer in her capacity as adviser to the Committee.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

None

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