



Policy Title	Whistleblowing Policy
Policy No.	010
Policy Aim	To describe the process for reporting a concern about any matter prescribed in the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998 (“the Act”).
Adoption Date	September 2010
Last Revision Date	August 2024
Review Date	At the Annual Meeting following an Ordinary Election
Responsible Officer	Town Clerk
Approving Body	Full Council
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Version History

Date	Version	Author / Editor	Comments

Review Record

Date	Type of Review Conducted	Summary of Actions Taken or Decisions Made	Completed By

1. **What is Whistleblowing?**

- 1.1. Employees are often the first to realise that there is something seriously wrong with the Council. However, they may not express their concerns as they feel that speaking up would be disloyal to their colleagues or to the Council.
- 1.2. Whistleblowing encourage and enables employees to raise a serious concern within the Councils rather than overlooking a problem or ‘blowing the whistle’ outside. There are legal protections for whistleblowers contained within the Act.

2. **Our Commitment.** The Council is committed to the highest possible standards of openness, probity and accountability. In line with that commitment, we expect employees, and others that we deal with, who have serious concerns about any aspect of the Council’s work to come forward and voice those concerns.

3. **Who does this Policy apply to?** The policy applies to all employees, (including those designated as casual workers, temporary, agency, authorised volunteers or work experience), and those contractors working for the Council and on Council premises, for example, agency staff and builders. It also covers suppliers and those providing services under a contract with the Council in their own premises. The policy also covers Members.

4. **The Aims of this Policy.**

- 4.1. To encourage you to feel confident in raising concerns and to question and act upon concerns about practice.
- 4.2. To provide avenues for you to raise concerns in confidence and receive feedback on any action taken.
- 4.3. To ensure that you receive a response to your concerns and that you are aware of how to pursue them if you are not satisfied.
- 4.4. To reassure you that you will be protected from possible reprisals or victimisation if you have a reasonable belief that you have made a disclosure in good faith.

5. **What types of concerns are covered by this Policy?**

- 5.1. The types of circumstance in which whistleblowing is actively encouraged is tightly prescribed in the [Section 1 of the Act](#), and a disclosure on any of these matters that are made lawfully, known as a qualifying disclosure, will not result any detriment to the individual making the report in accordance with [Section 2 of the Act](#):
- 5.1.1. That a criminal offence has been committed, is being committed or is likely to be committed.
 - 5.1.2. That a person has failed, is failing or is likely to fail to comply with any legal obligation to which he is subject.
 - 5.1.3. That a miscarriage of justice has occurred, is occurring or is likely to occur.
 - 5.1.4. That the health or safety of any individual has been, is being or is likely to be endangered.
 - 5.1.5. That the environment has been, is being or is likely to be damaged.
 - 5.1.6. That information tending to show any matter falling within any one of the preceding paragraphs has been, is being or is likely to be deliberately concealed.
- 5.2. Other procedures are available to employees e.g. the Grievance procedure which relates to complaints about your own employment. This policy also does not replace other corporate complaints procedures which are for public use.

6. Safeguards against victimisation

- 6.1. The Council recognises that the decision to report a concern can be a difficult one to make. If what you are saying is true you should have nothing to fear because you will be doing your duty to your employer and those for whom you provide a service.
- 6.2. The Council will not tolerate any harassment or victimisation (including informal pressures) and will take appropriate action to protect you when you raise a concern in good faith.

7. Confidentiality

- 7.1. All concerns will be treated in confidence and every effort will be made not to reveal your identity. If you so wish. At the appropriate time, however, you may need to come forward as a witness.
- 7.2. This policy encourages you however to put your name to your concern whenever possible. Please note that:
 - 7.2.1. Staff must disclose the information in good faith.
 - 7.2.2. Staff must believe it to be substantially true.

7.2.3. Staff must **not** act maliciously or make false allegations.

7.2.4. Staff must **not** seek any personal gain.

8. **How do I raise a concern?**

8.1. In the first instance, any concern you may have should be raised with the Town Clerk; if the concern is about the Town Clerk, the Chair of the Council should be approached. Once the concern has been raised, an investigative process will take place and you may be required to give a written statement that will be considered as part of that investigation. You will be kept updated on the progress of the investigation and any outcomes of it.

8.2. Once the investigation has completed and you reasonably believe that the action taken has been inappropriate, the matter should be escalated to the appropriate external body. These bodies include:

8.2.1. HM Revenue & Customs.

8.2.2. The Health and Safety Executive.

8.2.3. The Environment Agency.

8.2.4. The Serious Fraud Office.

8.2.5. The Charity Commission.

8.2.6. The Pensions Regulator.

8.2.7. The Information Commissioner.

8.2.8. The Financial Conduct Authority.

8.3. Although the list above concerns the most likely external authorities related to the work of the Town Council, it is not exhaustive. For a complete list of the prescribed people and bodies can be found at the [gov.uk website](https://www.gov.uk).