



Whistleblowing Procedure

This procedure applies when you have a concern about any aspect of service provision or the conduct of officers, members of the council or others acting on behalf of the council. This may be about something that:

- Makes you feel uncomfortable in terms of known standards, your experience or the standards you believe the council subscribes to; or
- Is against the council's standing orders and policies; or
- Falls below established standards of practice; or
- Amounts to improper conduct.

It does not cover matters concerning your own employment, for which the council has a grievance procedure (insert link).

Colour key:

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| Employee responsibility |
| investigating officer responsibility |

| Actions | Responsibilities and Duties |
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| 1 Raise concern | <p>In the first instance, anyone with a concern should normally raise this with the line manager. This depends on the seriousness and sensitivity of the issues involved and who is suspected of the malpractice, so as an alternative, a concern may be raised with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Chief Executive (tel 01432 260044) • The Monitoring Officer (tel 01432 260657) • The Chief Financial Officer (01432 383514) • Internal Audit Manager (01432 260294) <p>A concern may be made orally or in writing and the earlier it is raised, the easier it is to take action. Advice and guidance may be sought from:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitoring Officer; or • A trade union; or • Public Concern at Work – an independent charity http://www.pcaw.org.uk/adviceline Tel 020 7404 6609 <p>It is not the role of the individual to attempt to investigate any suspected malpractice.</p> |

| Actions | Responsibilities and Duties |
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| | A Whistle blower may be interviewed further as part of an investigation – see Being a Witness and Confidentiality of Witness Statements |
| 2 Acknowledge concern | <p>Inform the Monitoring Officer and Internal Audit of the concern. Within 5 working days, write to the person raising the concern:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acknowledge that the concern has been received; • Indicate how it is proposed that the matter will be dealt with; • Give an estimate of anticipated timescales; • Advise of any initial actions or enquiries thus far; • Explain if further investigations will take place, including any possible interviewing of the whistle blower as a witness, and if not, why not; • Reassurance of support and safeguards in place to protect them; • Signpost to further support e.g. Employee Assistance Programme. |
| 3 Investigate concern | <p>It may be possible to resolve some concerns without the need for investigation.</p> <p>If an investigation is required, it may be investigated through the following channels, as appropriate:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • by management, internal audit or through the disciplinary process; • referral to the police; • referral to the external auditor; • an independent inquiry. <p>See conducting an investigation guidance - further guidance, where relevant to the particular case, is listed below. Guidance is also available from the Monitoring Officer and/or HR if required.</p> <p>Any urgent action, if required, will be actioned before an investigation commences. Concerns or allegations which fall within the scope of specific procedures (e.g. safeguarding) would normally be referred for consideration under those procedures.</p> |

| Actions | Responsibilities and Duties |
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| 4 Determine outcome | <p>The outcome of any investigation will be unique to each case and subject to determination by the requirements of any specific procedure followed.</p> <p>Outcomes may include, but not be exclusive to, reviews of policy and practice, or formal disciplinary action against one or more officers.</p> <p>If it is found that the concern was found to be unfounded and/or raised with malicious or mischievous intent, then formal action will be taken against the person raising that concern.</p> |
| 5 Notify person raising concern | <p>Write to the person to let them know the outcome. Depending on the nature of the matter, there may be limitations to what may be disclosed.</p> <p>Advise them of any further action they could take if they are not satisfied with the outcome (see taking matters further, below)</p> |
| 6 Taking matters further | <p>If the outcome is not considered satisfactory, the matter may be raised with appropriate/relevant external statutory or regulatory bodies e.g.:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health & Safety Executive • Ofsted • Care Quality Commission • External Audit • Local Government Ombudsman • The police |

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| Document links | <p>Being a Witness</p> <p>Conducting Investigations</p> <p>Confidentiality of Witness Statements</p> <p>Failure to Participate in a Formal Process</p> <p>Effective Interview Guidance</p> <p>Suspension Guidance</p> <p>Guide to Behaviour</p> <p>Harassment and Bullying Guidance</p> <p>Employee Health, Safety and Wellbeing policy and related guidance</p> <p>Disciplinary Procedure</p> <p>Safeguarding Adults policy</p> <p>Safeguarding Children Board policies and procedures</p> <p>Anti-fraud, Bribery and Corruption Policy</p> |
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Document Control

| Version | Date issued | Description of change | Pages affected | Updated by |
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| Draft 2 | 27 March 2015 | Updated/2 nd draft | All | Governance Services / Assistant Director, Governance |
| Draft 3 | 8 Sep 2015 | Updated/3 rd draft | All | Head of Law, Governance & Resilience |

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