

C-pip feedback on draft Whistleblowing Policy

Welcome is the approach and clarity regarding the policy on whistleblowing.

2.1 “encourages” employees – to confirm this is open to members of staff only within the authority to whistleblow or does the policy apply to members of the public? Reference 2.3 is that the policy is open to employees of contracts - wouldn't they have their own policy and process?

2.4 – in bullet points, suggest specifically mention code of conduct

2.4 – reference to damage to the environment. It might be worth including an example here as could be wide ranging and would this cover whole service approach e.g. new road, tree cutting.

3.2; 3.3 and 4.1 – would it be possible if whistleblowing is through a union so not anonymous, but also not disclose the identity of someone to the organisation.

4.2 – should the whistleblowing only be accepted in writing – there is an issue of being on the telephone of misinterpreted. If has to be by telephone to be summed up in writing and sent back to the whistleblower (if contact given).

5 – First line, suggestion : The council is committed to giving concerns raised through the policy thorough consideration whilst responding as quickly as possible. We will also be open and transparent with people raising concerns and those subject to whistleblowing, explaining if information cannot be shared due to a sensitive nature.

5 – there seems to be quite a bit of the process going through the monitoring officer – what about also being able to go to the deputy monitoring officer(s) otherwise knowing the demands there could be delays.

5 – *acknowledge that the concerns be received* suggest that is done immediately once the items is picked up to say that there will be assessment and be in touch within ten working days.

5 – *telling you whether further investigation will take place and if not, why not* – add “*this will be in writing if contact information is provided*”.

5 – if not content with why not being pursued can this be challenged – is this covered by “*how the matter can be taken further*”.

Would a full report be available to the whistleblower?

(seems to be missing point 6)

9. Will the register be of both founded and unfounded cases? If unfounded included in the register it does mean if a similar case comes up again can refer back; however could slight the service without evidence.

Other points

The policy is largely silent on treatment of teams / individual the subject of whistleblowing. This could be picked up in terms of process but points to consider:

- When is the team / individual told they are subject to whistleblowing?
- What is the process with them – including transparency of the complaint being made

- Would they see a copy of the final report?
- Are they kept on a register even if findings unfounded?

Trade Union Feedback

- The unions were supportive and welcomed the new policy
- They asked whether the policy could be clearer about what to do in the event that someone wishes to blow the whistle about a member – even if this was just a signpost to the correct procedure
- They also asked if there could be a signpost to the whistleblowing policy used by schools