

Audit Committee

23 March 2017



Title	Confidential Reporting Code (Whistleblowing Policy)		
Purpose of the report	To note		
Report Author	Internal Audit Manager, Punita Talwar		
Cabinet Member	Councillor Howard Williams	Confidential	No
Corporate Priority	Financial Sustainability		
Recommendations	The Audit Committee is asked to note the proposed amendments to the Confidential Reporting Code (Whistleblowing Policy) and the leaflet and to recommend any further amendments if necessary.		
Reason for Recommendation	Not applicable		

1. Key issues

1.1 The Confidential Reporting Code forms part of the Council's Constitution and sets out how to raise serious concerns about any aspect of the Council's work. It also sets out legal protection against reprisals under the Public Interest Disclosure Act. The Code is attached as Appendix 1.

2. Options analysis and proposal

2.1 The Audit Committee is required to review the Code annually.

2.2 The Code details:

- (a) The nature of concerns which may be reported.
- (b) Other policies such as the Grievance Procedure which exist to deal with employment issues including bullying or harassment.
- (c) Safeguards against harassment or victimisation as a result of raising a concern.
- (d) Processes for raising and dealing with concerns including the various officers and organisations who could be contacted.

2.3 The Code is available to staff and Members on the intranet and it is included in the Council's Constitution. A leaflet (Appendix 2) has been placed on every staff notice board.

- 2.4 There are two proposed amendments (additional text) to the Confidential Reporting Code highlighted at paragraph 2.2, relating to possible concern areas that may be raised under the Code:
- ‘Serious and Organised Crime’
 - ‘If Safeguarding concerns are highlighted, then the Safeguarding policy and procedures must be adhered to’.
- 2.4 One further amendment is recommended at paragraph 7.5, to include the Deputy Chief Executive, Lee O’Neil as an additional named officer to whom concerns can be raised.
- 2.5 Communications have recommended some slight changes to the wording on the Leaflet (Appendix 2). Consideration is being given to make some further updates to the leaflet.
- 3. Financial implications**
- 3.1 Not applicable.
- 4. Other considerations**
- 4.1 There are none.
- 5. Timetable for implementation**
- 5.1 Not applicable.

Background papers:

Appendices:

Appendix 1 – Confidential Reporting Code

Appendix 2 – Leaflet displayed on notice boards