

Public Report
Standards and Ethics Committee

Committee Name and Date of Committee Meeting

Standards and Ethics Committee – 16 January 2025

Report Title

Proposed Amendments to the Whistleblowing Policy

Is this a Key Decision and has it been included on the Forward Plan?

No

Strategic Director Approving Submission of the Report

N/A

Report Author(s)

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Ward(s) Affected

Borough-Wide

Report Summary

A report setting out proposed minor amendments to the Whistleblowing Policy following a review of the Policy.

Recommendations

1. That the Committee considers and approves the proposed amendments to the Whistleblowing Policy.
2. That the Committee suggests any further amendments to the Whistleblowing Policy it considers appropriate.
3. That subject to 2) above the Committee approve the Whistleblowing Policy at Appendix 1.

List of Appendices Included

Appendix 1 - Whistleblowing Policy with proposed amendments

Background Papers

None

Consideration by any other Council Committee, Scrutiny or Advisory Panel

None

Council Approval Required

No

Exempt from the Press and Public

No

Proposed Amendments to the Whistleblowing Policy

1. Background

- 1.1 As members will be aware, the oversight of the Whistleblowing Policy falls within the remit of the Standards and Ethics Committee. As part of this oversight and in accordance with good practice, the Whistleblowing Policy is kept under periodic review.
- 1.2 Following the latest review of the Whistleblowing Policy by officers, a small number of minor amendments to the Policy, are proposed below. A full copy of the Whistleblowing Policy with suggested amendments in “tracked” version is at Appendix 1.
- 1.3 The proposed amendments are “administrative” changes and are as follows:
 - i) Amendments to the name of the name of the Head of Audit to Louise Ivens.
 - ii) An additional name added as a Whistleblowing Officer as Assistant Director for HR Lynsey Linton.
- 1.4 The legislation referred to in the Policy remains in force and has not been changed and the procedure for dealing with disclosures once they have been received by the Council remains the same. The telephone numbers and other contact details available for disclosure within the Policy have been checked and are current and as such it is considered that the current Policy subject to the above amendments is appropriate and remains fit for purpose.

2. Key Issues

- 2.1 The proposed amendments to the Whistleblowing Policy are set out in Appendix 1, as referred to above.

3. Options considered and recommended proposal

- 3.1 Recommendations are set out above.

4. Consultation on Proposal

- 4.1 Relevant officers who will be undertaking roles as Whistleblowing Officers have been consulted about these amendments and the Policy in general and are content that the Whistleblowing Policy remains fit for purposes and operates appropriately.

5. Timetable and Accountability for Implementing this Decision

5.1 The changes to the Whistleblowing Policy will be implemented immediately following the Standards and Ethics Committee meeting.

6. Financial and Procurement Advice and Implications

6.1 Any work undertaken by Legal Services in dealing with these matters is within the budget for Legal Services.

7. Legal Advice and Implications

7.1 The Council has a statutory duty to provide an appropriate Whistleblowing Policy and arrangements for dealing with concerns raised through the policy.

8. Human Resources Advice and Implications

8.1 None.

9. Implications for Children and Young People and Vulnerable Adults

9.1 None.

10. Equalities and Human Rights Advice and Implications

10.1 The Whistleblowing Policy is available to all employees, workers and contractors of the Council.

11. Implications for Partners

11.1 None.

12. Risks and Mitigation

12.1 There is a risk that if serious misconduct is not reported pursuant to the Whistleblowing Policy, serious issues will not be appropriately investigated and addressed.

13. Accountable Officer(s)

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