

Title of meeting:	Governance & Audit & Standards Committee
Date of meeting:	3 March 2020
Subject:	Whistleblowing Annual Report and Policy
Report by:	Elizabeth Goodwin - Chief Internal Auditor
Wards affected:	Not applicable
Key decision:	No
Full Council decision:	No

1 Purpose of report

1.1 To update Members of this Committee on the nature and handling of any whistleblowing concerns which have been raised for the period January 2019 to December 2019. In addition to this seek approval in relation to minor amendments to the whistleblowing policy following the departure of the previous City Solicitor and Director of HR, Legal and Performance.

2 Recommendations

It is recommended that Members of the Governance and Audit and Standards Committee:

- 2.1 Note this report and the attached Appendix A and consider whether any further action is required.
- 2.2 Approve the changes to the whistleblowing policy, Appendix B which has been amended following the departure of the City Solicitor and Director of HR Legal and Performance.

3 Background

- 3.1 The Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998 gives employees certain rights in relation to whistleblowing. An employee has a right to make a protected disclosure to prescribed persons where the employee reasonably believes:
 - 3.1.1 A criminal offence has, or is going to be committed;
 - 3.1.2 There is a breach of a legal obligation;
 - 3.1.3 A miscarriage of justice;
 - 3.1.4 There is a danger to the health and safety of any individual;
 - 3.1.5 There will be damage to the environment; or
 - 3.1.6 There is deliberate concealment of information tending to show any of the above five matters.
- 3.2 The Act provides that employees shall suffer no detriment to their employment as a result of blowing the whistle, including disciplinary action.

- 3.3 The Policy applies to all Council staff, including employees, temporary workers, agency staff and any contractor remunerated by the Council.
- 3.4 As requested by the Governance & Audit & Standards Committee, an annual report is produced each year in respect of whistleblowing concerns. This year's report is attached as "Appendix A".
- 3.5 After having considered "Appendix A" Members are asked to decide whether there is any cause for concern and to consider whether any further action is required by the Committee, or the Chief Internal Auditor.
- 3.6 Three investigations were commenced in 2019. Recommendations were made and action taken as appropriate, as noted on Appendix A.

4 Reasons for recommendations

- 4.1 To make Members of the Committee aware of the current position with regard to whistleblowing and ensure that any appropriate action is taken.

5 Integrated Impact Assessment

- 5.1 The contents of this report do not have any relevant equalities and environmental impact and therefore an Integrated Impact assessment is not required.

6 Legal implications

- 6.1 The Legal implications are incorporated within the body of this report. There are no other immediate legal implications arising from this report

7 Director of Finance's comments:

- 7.1 There are no financial implications arising from the recommendations set out in this report.

.....
 Chief Internal Auditor

**Appendices: Appendix A - Schedule of Whistleblowing Concerns
 Appendix B - Whistleblowing Policy Review September 2019**

Background list of documents: Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972

The following documents disclose facts or matters, which have been relied upon to a material extent by the author in preparing this report:

Title of document	Location
Whistleblowing Policy	http://svp-policyhub02/PolicyHubAdmin/Inbox/MyLibrary