

# Governance, Risk and Best Value Committee

10am, Tuesday 20 March 2018

## Whistleblowing annual report

Item number	7.13
Report number	
Executive/routine	
Wards	
Council Commitments	

### Executive summary

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This report provides a high level overview of whistleblowing activity between 1 December 2016 and 30 November 2017.

## Whistleblowing annual report

### Recommendations

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- 1.1 To note the report.

### Background

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- 2.1 This report covers the third full year of operation of the Council's whistleblowing service.
- 2.2 The Council's whistleblowing hotline (telephone, email and online reporting) and associated services (including disclosure management, investigations and training) continue to be provided by independent company Safecall.

### Main report

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#### Reports to Safecall

- 3.1 During the reporting period Safecall received 21 disclosures, a significant increase on the 11 recorded the previous year:

Category	Number of disclosures
Major/significant qualifying disclosures	6
Minor/operational qualifying disclosures	8
Non-qualifying disclosures	6
To be determined	1

#### Investigations

- 3.2 Eight investigations were completed during the reporting period with outcomes and management action reported quarterly to the Governance, Risk and Best Value Committee.

- 3.3 Six investigations, relating to eleven disclosures, are ongoing and will be reported to the Governance, Risk and Best Value Committee on completion.
- 3.4 Six reports did not qualify as disclosures under the whistleblowing policy but the Whistleblowing Team ensured that the concerns raised were addressed via the appropriate channel, eg. complaints process, grievance procedure, HR case management, where appropriate.
- 3.5 Investigation skills training for Investigating Officers has had to be postponed until such time as staff teams in service areas are settled and suitable nominees can be identified.

### **Outcomes**

- 3.6 Some of the recommendations that have resulted from investigations have led to amendments to policy, improvements to procedures and processes, the development and sharing of best practice and improved service delivery.
- 3.7 Where the service provider has an open line of communication with the whistleblower they have been able to provide feedback on the outcome of an investigation. Where this has not been possible they have stored the information for dissemination to the whistleblower should they make further contact.

### **Improvement objectives**

- 3.8 A number of areas were identified for potential improvement including:
  - 3.8.1 full alignment and cross referencing between the Whistleblowing and other HR policies, including the development of an aligned investigation framework;
  - 3.8.2 the development of a formal process and improved guidance for managers receiving internal disclosures;
  - 3.8.3 the development of an experienced, skilled internal pool of investigating managers trained on the investigation framework, approach and techniques;
  - 3.8.4 improved staff engagement including a refreshed communications strategy, distribution of promotional materials, improved Orb guidance and feedback via the Employee Survey;
  - 3.8.5 improved awareness of policy requirements and associated processes through a programme of briefings and awareness sessions for groups of staff who might be involved in the process e.g. senior managers, directorate liaison officers; and
  - 3.8.6 options appraisal and introduction of a system for monitoring management actions arising from investigations – a new objective identified during the course of the reporting year.
- 3.9 These improvements will be prioritised during 2018 and the Head of Strategy and Insight has agreed to allocate sufficient resource to take these forward.

## **External recognition**

- 3.10 In February 2017 the Council's whistleblowing service was shortlisted in the Good Governance category of the Public Finance Innovation Awards.
- 3.11 Following an earlier appearance at the Scottish Parliament's Petitions Committee, the Council's Whistleblowing Team were asked to appear at the Health and Sport Committee on 13 June 2017 to explain the Council's whistleblowing arrangements to MSPs who were considering the introduction of improved whistleblowing arrangements for the NHS in Scotland.

## **Measures of success**

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- 4.1 Significant progress against improvement objectives in 2018.
- 4.2 Improved awareness and satisfaction levels through the bi-annual Employee Survey.

## **Financial impact**

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- 5.1 The cost of the whistleblowing service between 1 December 2016 and 30 November 2017 was £18,900 excluding VAT.

## **Risk, policy, compliance and governance impact**

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- 6.1 The whistleblowing policy and associated operational arrangements were developed and agreed to complement existing management reporting arrangements and to ensure employees have the right to raise concerns in the knowledge that they will be taken seriously, that matters will be investigated appropriately and confidentiality will be maintained.

## **Equalities impact**

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- 7.1 There are no direct equalities implications arising from this report.

## **Sustainability impact**

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- 8.1 There are no sustainability implications arising from this report.

## **Consultation and engagement**

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- 9.1 Consultation with the trades unions was undertaken to secure a local agreement in relation to the revised whistleblowing policy.

- 9.2 Investigating officers have been consulted over the development and the testing of a new whistleblowing investigation toolkit which will be developed further in conjunction with other improvement objectives.

## **Background reading/external references**

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[Finance and Resources Committee 27 August 2015: item 7.13 - Review of Whistleblowing Arrangements](#)

[Finance and Resources Committee 23 March 2017: item 7.2 - Whistleblowing Policy](#)

### **Andrew Kerr**

Chief Executive

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## **Appendices**

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Appendix 1: Safecall Annual Management Information Report

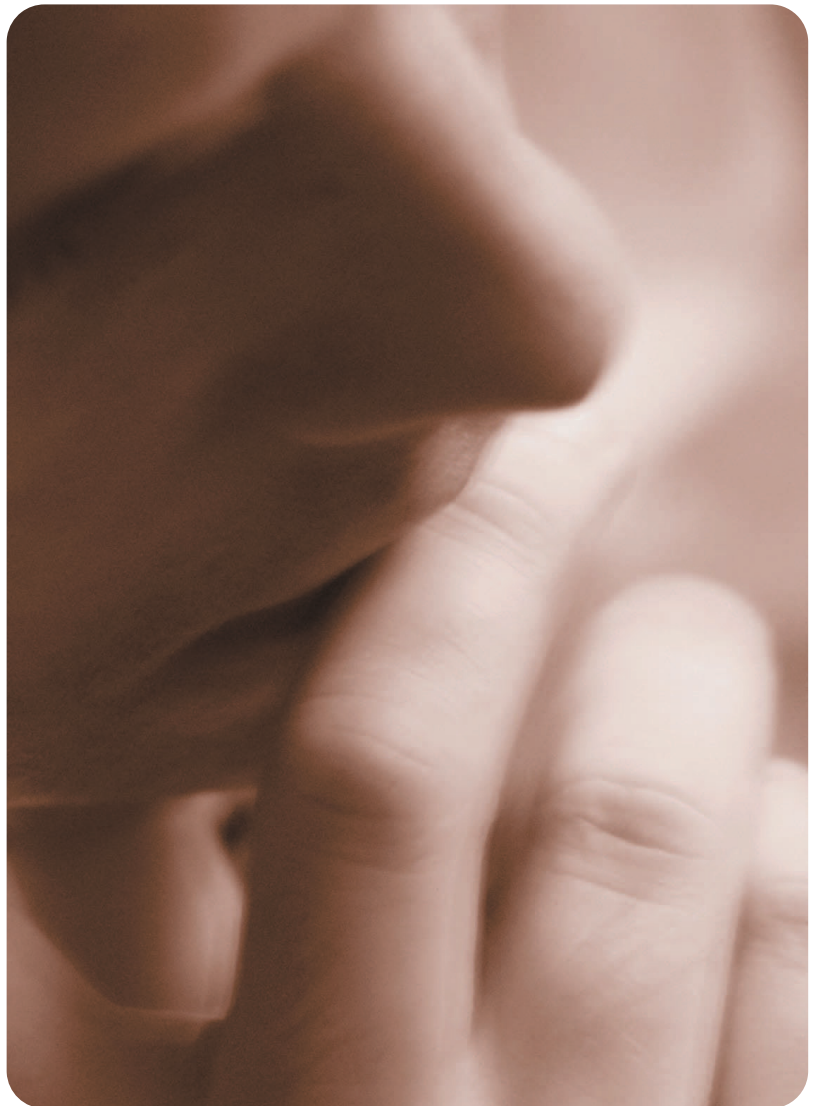
**safe**call

A Law Debenture Company

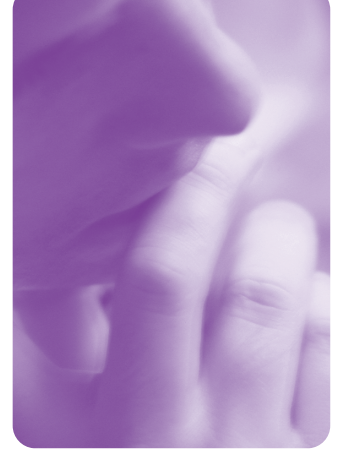
The  
Whistleblowing  
Company®

# Safecall Annual Report for The City of Edinburgh Council

1st December 2016 to 30th November 2017



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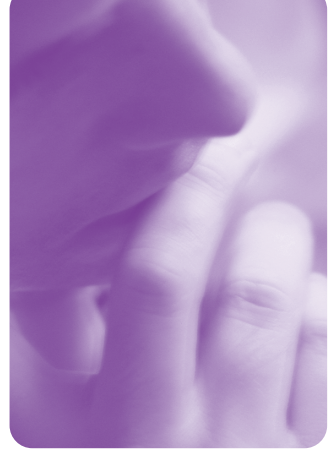


**Annual report for The City of Edinburgh Council**

**Period - 1st December 2016 to 30th November 2017**

**Tim Smith**

**Safecall Ltd**



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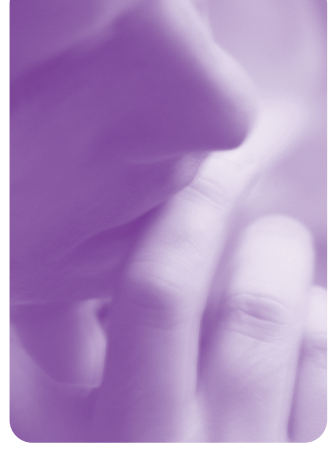
**Management information**

**Appendix A**

**Key Performance Indicators**

**Appendix B**



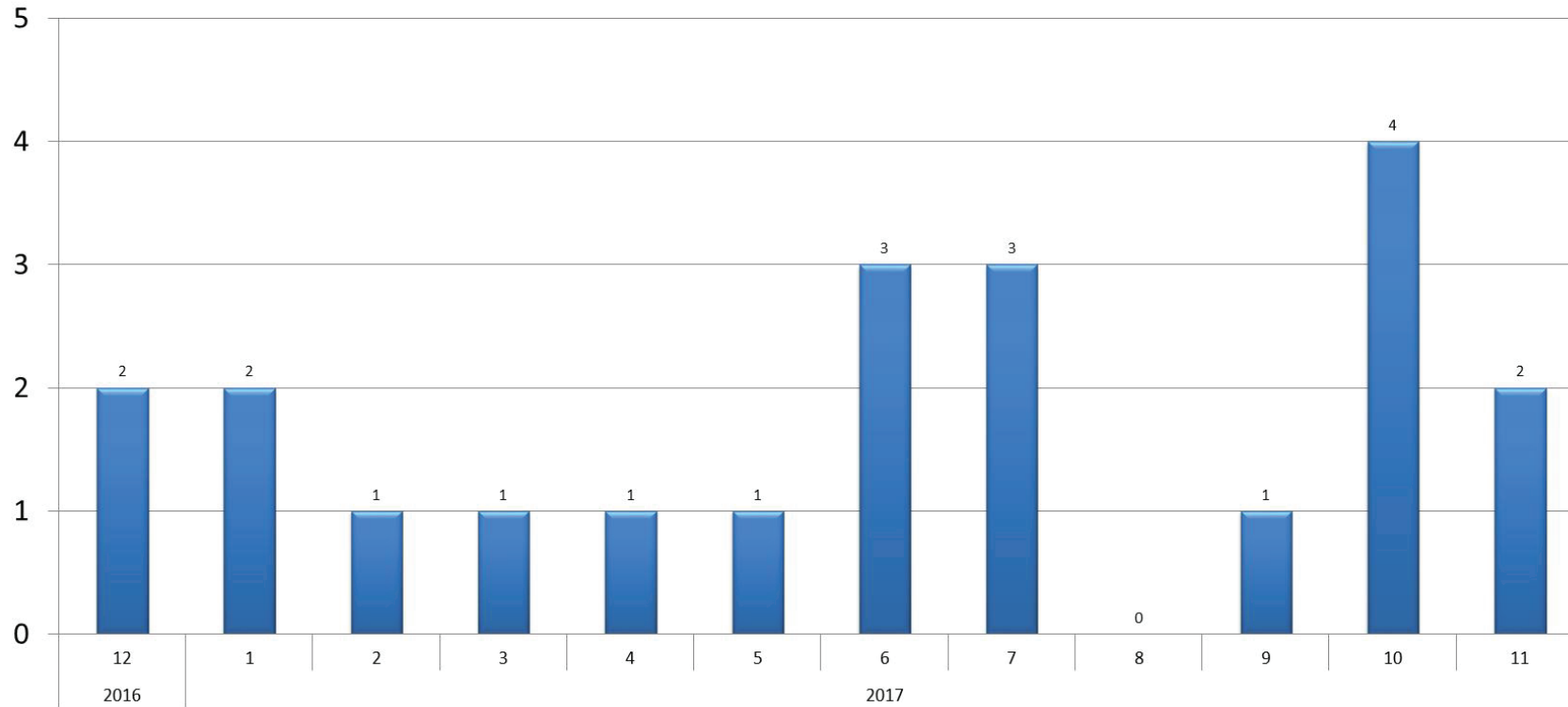


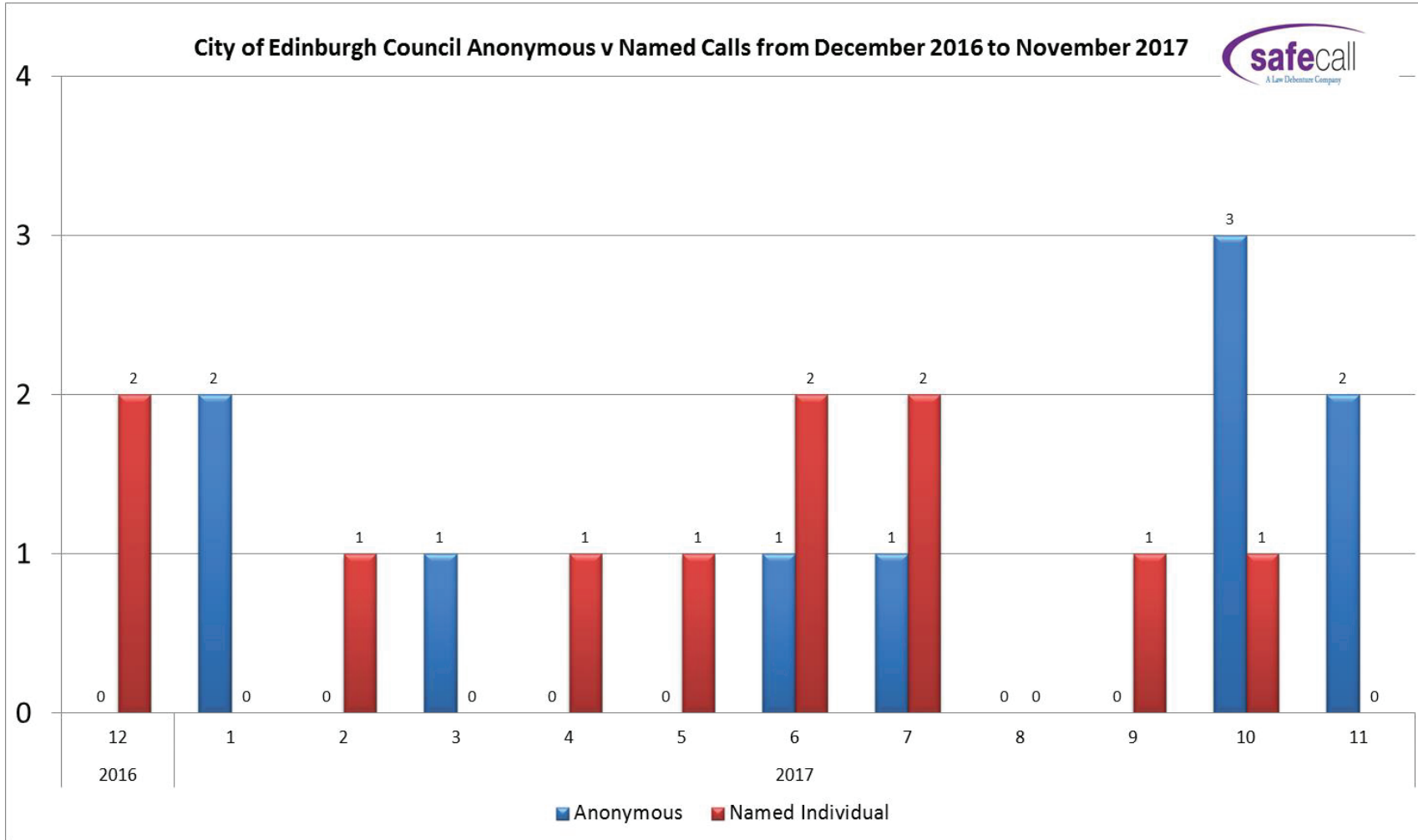
## Appendix A

### Managment Information



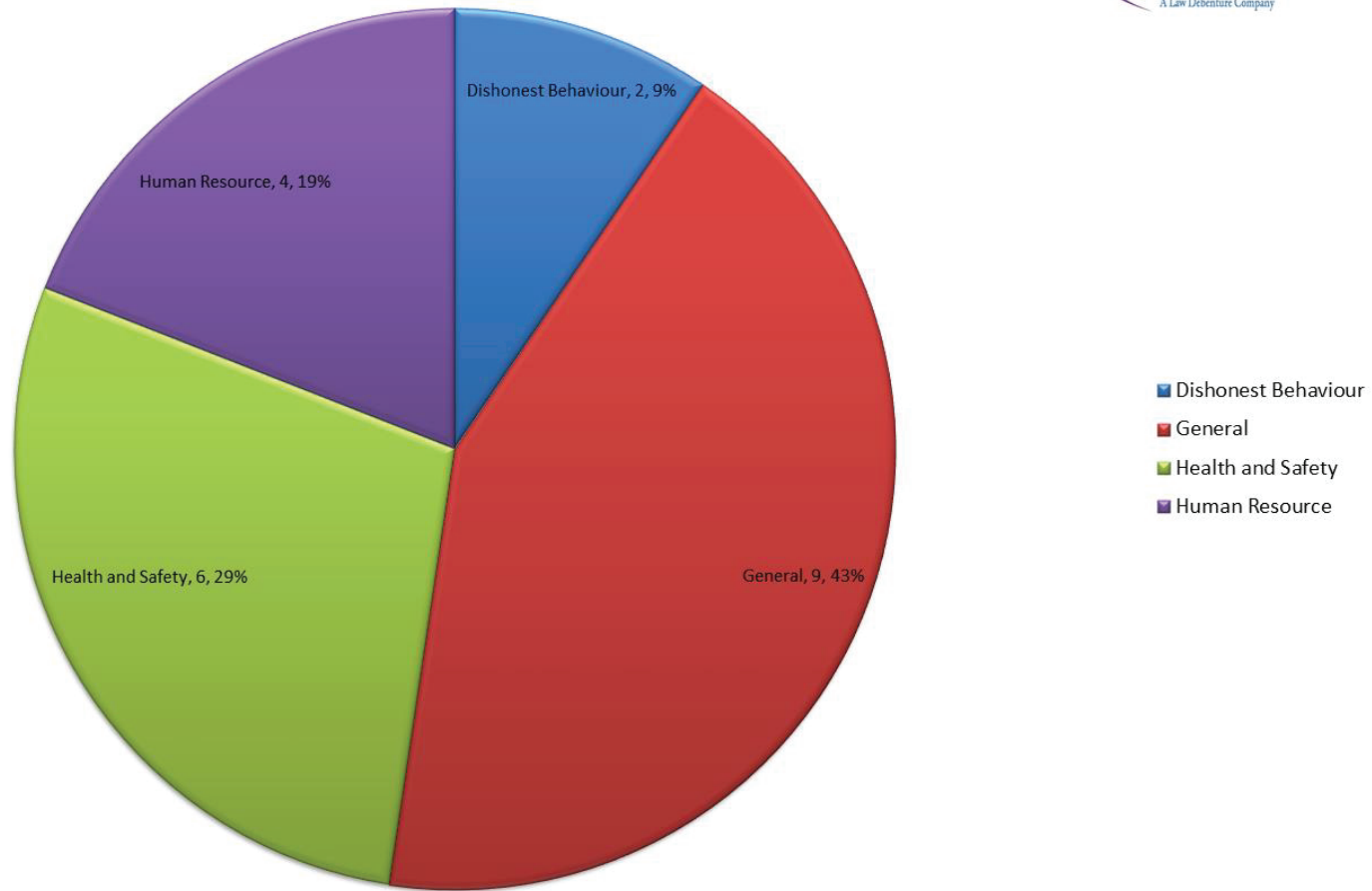
### Reports per Month City of Edinburgh Council





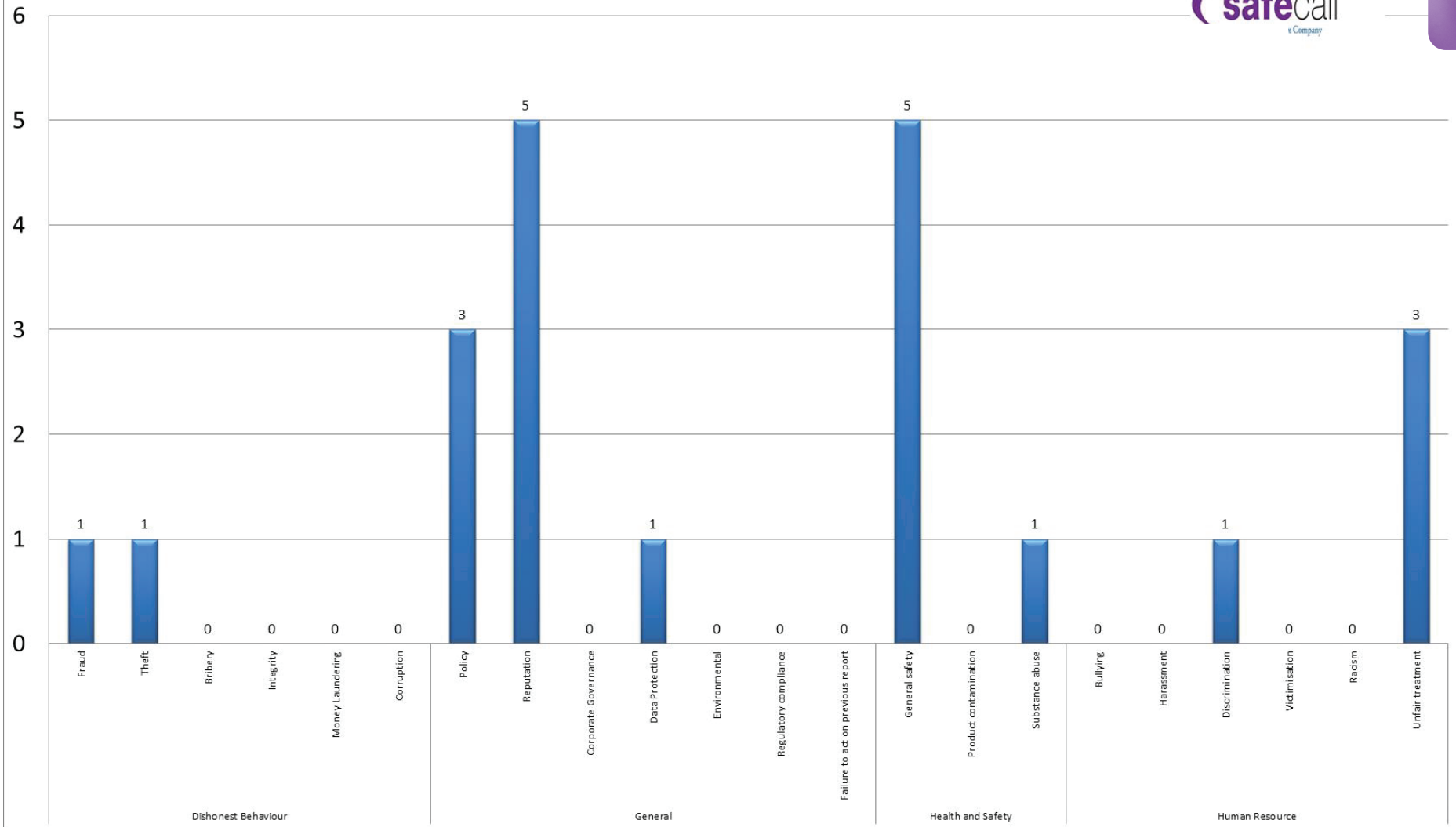


Reports By Classification City of Edinburgh Council from December 2016 to November 2017



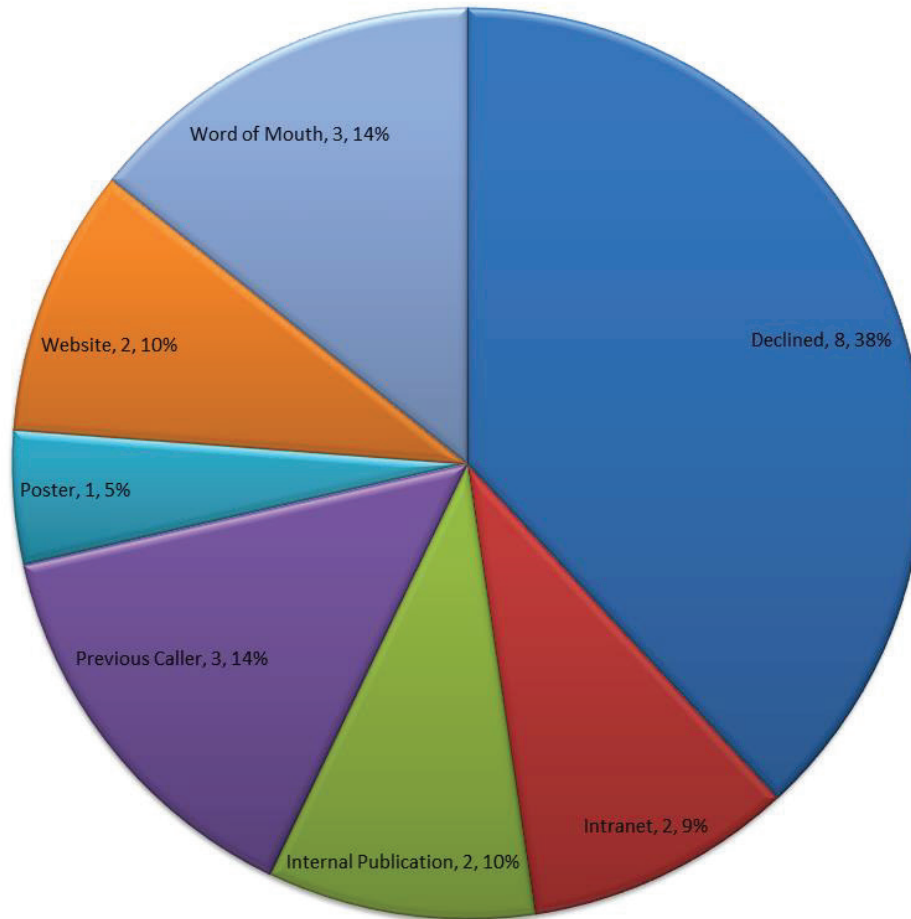


Reports by Sub Classification City of Edinburgh Council from December 2016 to November 2017



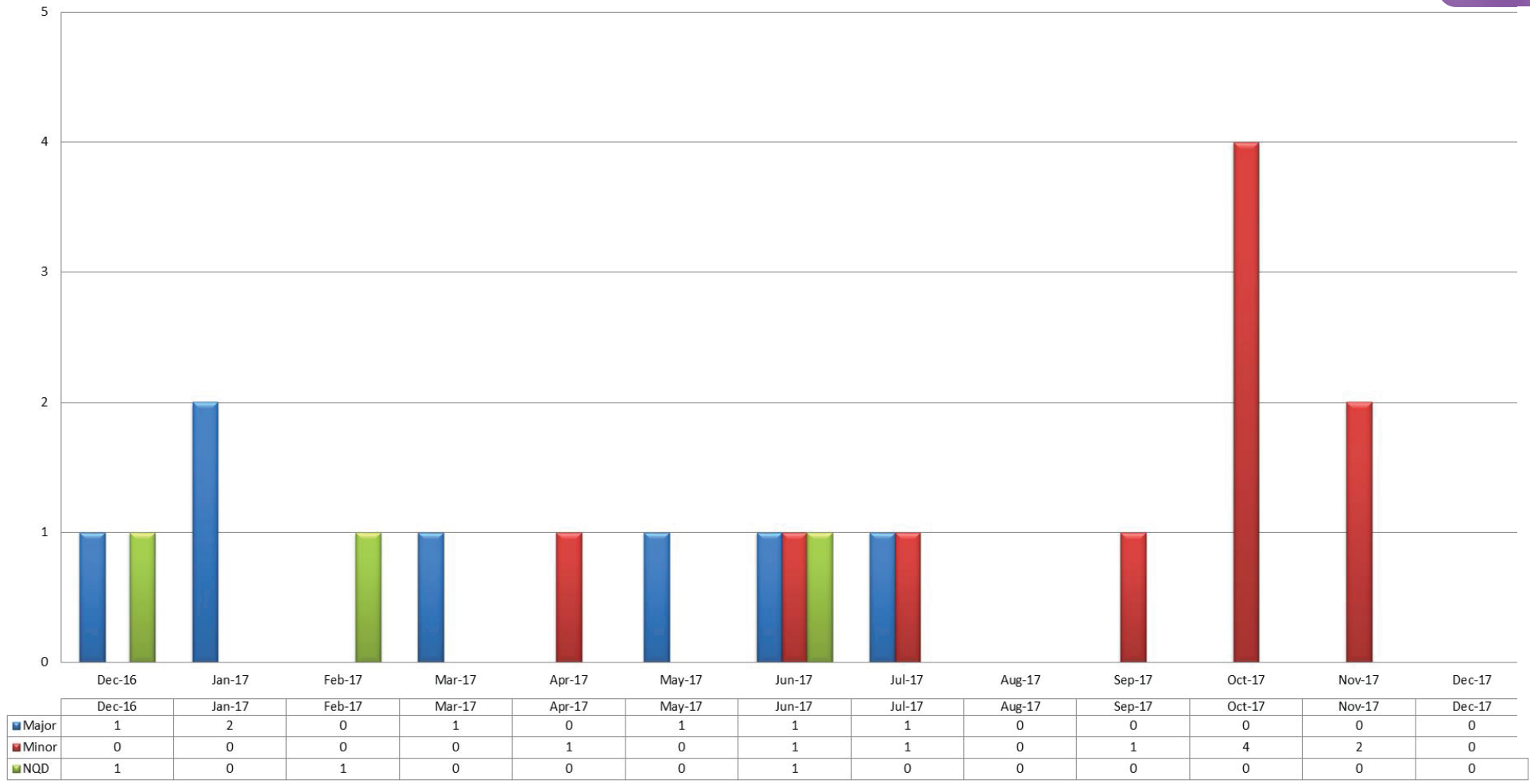


City of Edinburgh Council - How caller became aware of Safecall from December 2016 to November 2017



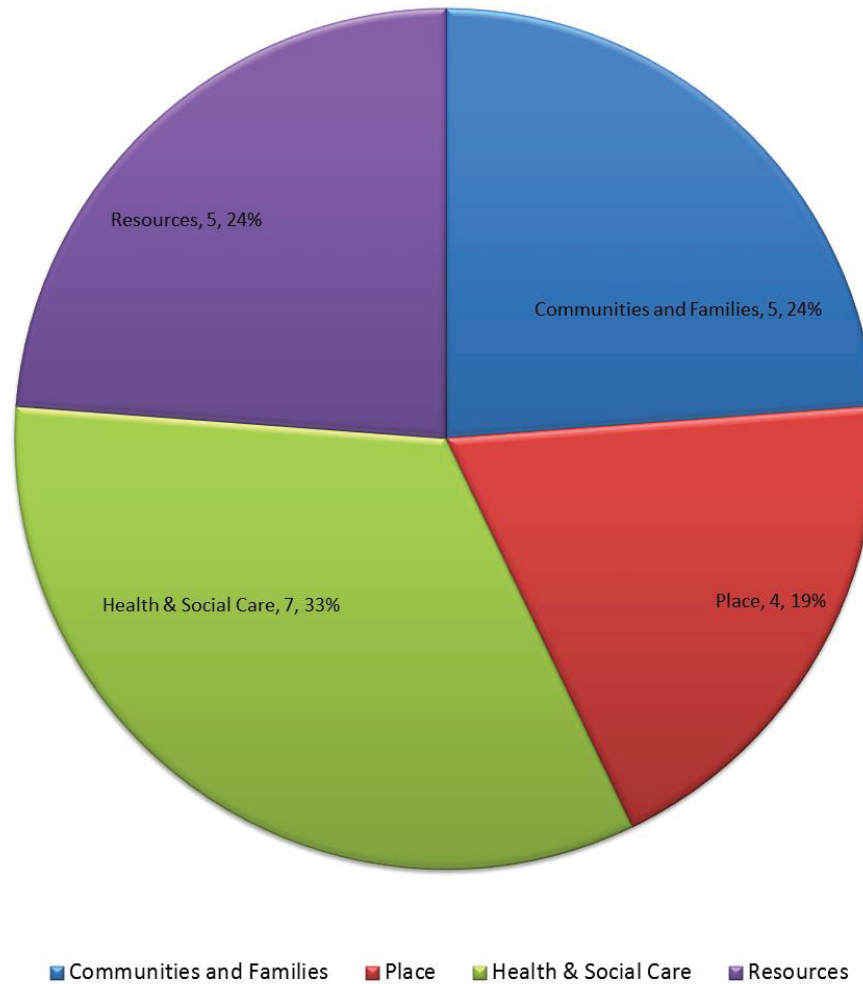


**Major or Minor Reports from December 2016 to November 2017**





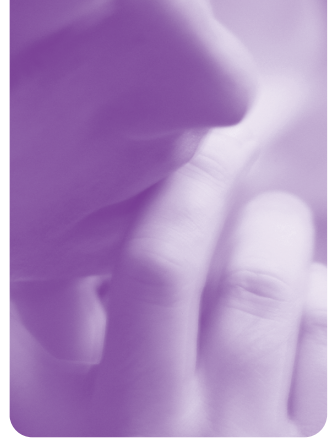
**Reports by Directorate from December 2016 to November 2017**





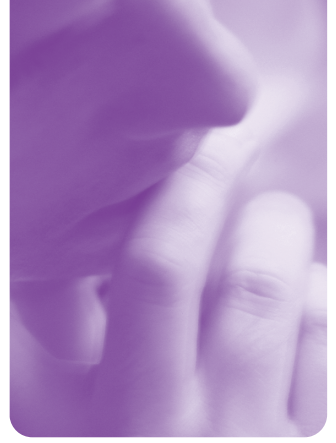


Date	Month	Year	Quarter	Classification	Sub classification	Ref	Anonymous	Marketing	Major / Minor	Department
13/12/2016	December	2016	Q4	Health and Safety	General Safety	12/16	No	Not disclosed	Major	Health & Social Care
17/12/2016	December	2016	Q4	General	Reputation	13/16	No	Not disclosed	NQD	Health & Social Care
13/01/2017	January	2017	Q1	General	Policy	01/17	Yes	Not Disclosed	Major	Health & Social Care
16/01/2017	January	2017	Q1	Health & Safety	General Safety	02/17	Yes	Not Disclosed	Major	Health & Social Care
27/02/2017	February	2017	Q1	Human Resource	Unfair Treatment	03/17	No	Word of Mouth	NQD	Resources
17/03/2017	March	2017	Q1	Health and Safety	Substance Abuse	04/17	Yes	Word of Mouth	Major	Resources
27/04/2017	April	2017	Q2	Human Resource	Discrimination	05/17	No	Previous caller	Minor	Resources
23/05/2017	May	2017	Q2	Health and Safety	General Safety	06/17	No	Poster	Major	Place
01/06/2017	June	2017	Q2	Dishonest Behaviour	Theft	07/17	No	Internal Publication	Major	Communities & Families
14/06/2017	June	2017	Q2	Human Resource	Unfair Treatment	08/17	No	Intranet	NQD	Health & Social Care
27/06/2017	June	2017	Q2	General	Reputation	09/17	Yes	Not Disclosed	Minor	Resources
03/07/2017	July	2017	Q3	Health and Safety	General Safety	06/17(Add)	No	Previous caller	Major	Place
07/07/2017	July	2017	Q3	General	Reputation	010/17	Yes	Word of Mouth	NQD	Resources
18/07/2017	July	2017	Q3	Dishonest Behaviour	Fraud	011/17	No	Website	Decision Pending	Place
11/09/2017	September	2017	Q3	General	Reputation	012/17	No	Intranet	NQD	Place
01/10/2017	October	2017	Q4	General	Policy	013/17	Yes	Internal Publication	Minor	Communities & Families
05/10/2017	October	2017	Q4	General	Reputation	014/17	Yes	Website	Minor	Communities & Families
05/10/2017	October	2017	Q4	Human Resource	Unfair Treatment	015/17	Yes	Not Disclosed	Minor	Communities & Families
14/10/2017	October	2017	Q4	General	Policy	016/17	No	Not Disclosed	Minor	Communities & Families
01/11/2017	November	2017	Q4	General	Data Protection	017/17	Yes	Not Disclosed	Minor	Health & Social Care
20/11/2017	November	2017	Q4	Health & Safety	General Safety	018/17	Yes	Previous Caller	Minor	Health & Social Care



## **Appendix B**

### **Key Performance Indicators**



## Key Performance Indicators

- KPI 1 Full compliance, all calls answered within four rings
- KPI2 No complaints made re provision of service during this period
- KPI 3 Full compliance, all reporting requirements achieved
- KPI 4 No referrals required during this period
- KPI 5 Full compliance, all minor/operational disclosures completed within 5 working days