

Governance, Risk and Best Value Committee

10am, Tuesday 27 November 2018

Whistleblowing update

Item number	7.9
Report number	
Executive/routine	
Wards	
Council Commitments	

Executive summary

This report provides a high level overview of the operation of the Council's whistleblowing service for the period 1 July to 30 September 2018.

The report also recommends that current follow-up arrangements for whistleblowing and Monitoring Officer reports should continue.

Whistleblowing update

Recommendations

- 1.1 To note the report, including that current follow-up arrangements for whistleblowing and Monitoring Officer reports should continue

Background

- 2.1 The Council's whistleblowing service, including a confidential reporting line, is contracted to an independent external organisation, currently Safecall Limited.
- 2.2 This report covers the period from 1 July to 30 September 2018.

Main report

Reports to Safecall

- 3.1 During the reporting period Safecall received five new disclosures as follows:

Category	Number of disclosures
Major/significant qualifying disclosures	0
Minor/operational qualifying disclosures	1
Category to be determined	1
Non-qualifying disclosures	3

- 3.2 Managing a number of complex investigations was the focus for officers this quarter.

Whistleblowing Review - Action Plan Progress and follow-up

- 3.3 The Monitoring Officer had confirmed that he would report back to Committee on follow-up of actions resulting from whistleblowing or Monitoring Officer reviews. Following further consideration, it is recommended that current follow-up arrangements by officers within Governance and/or Legal and Risk is sufficient and should continue. This will be kept under review and any recommended changes brought forward to committee as required.

Measures of success

- 4.1 Employees feel able to report suspected wrongdoing as early as possible in the knowledge that:
- 4.1.1 their concerns will be taken seriously and investigated appropriately;
 - 4.1.2 they will be protected from victimisation; and
 - 4.1.3 the provisions of the whistleblowing policy ensure all matters at the Council are fully transparent and officers are accountable.

Financial impact

- 5.1 The cost of the whistleblowing service for the three-month period 1 July to 30 September 2018 was £4,725 (exclusive of VAT).
- 5.2 Investigation costs totalled £6,248.45 (exclusive of VAT) this quarter.

Risk, policy, compliance and governance impact

- 6.1 The whistleblowing policy was 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

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

Sustainability impact

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

Consultation and engagement

9.1 There was consultation with the trades unions to secure a local agreement in relation to the revised whistleblowing policy.

Background reading/external references

[Finance and Resources Committee 27 March 2018: item 7.4 - Whistleblowing Policy](#)

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