

# Governance, Risk and Best Value Committee

10am, Tuesday 20 March 2018

## Whistleblowing update

Item number	7.12
Report number	
Executive/routine	
Wards	
Council Commitments	

### Executive summary

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This report provides a high level overview of the operation of the Council's whistleblowing service for the period 1 October to 31 December 2017.

## Whistleblowing update

### Recommendations

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- 1.1 To note the report and, in particular, the Chief Executive's extension of the existing service contract with the supplier, Safecall Limited, for an additional period of two years.

### Background

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- 2.1 The Council launched its confidential whistleblowing hotline service, provided by independent company Safecall, on 12 May 2014.
- 2.2 This report covers the period from 1 October to 31 December 2017.

### Main report

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#### Reports to Safecall

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

Category	Number of disclosures
Major/significant qualifying disclosures	0
Minor/operational qualifying disclosures	6
Category to be determined	0
Non-qualifying disclosures	0

#### Whistleblowing Review - Action Plan Progress

- 3.2 Officers continue to explore options for the monitoring and reporting of management actions that result from whistleblowing investigations. Systems already in use by other services, for the monitoring and reporting of other types

of management actions, will be appraised for their adaptability and any associated costs.

### **Supplier Contract**

- 3.3 The initial two year contract period expires on 11 May 2018 if the option to extend for up to a further two years is not taken up. The Monitoring Officer recommended to the Chief Executive that the contract be extended by the maximum two years allowed under the existing procurement authority and this has now been actioned.

### **Whistleblowing Policy**

- 3.4 The annual review of the policy is scheduled for the Finance and Resources Committee on 27 March 2018, with four minor amendments proposed.

## **Measures of success**

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- 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**

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- 5.1 The cost of the whistleblowing service for the three month period 1 October to 31 December 2017 was £4,725 (exclusive of VAT).
- 5.2 Investigation costs for the period were £11,032.40 (exclusive of VAT).

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

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- 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**

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

## 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](#)

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