

REPORT TO:	Standards Committee
REPORT NO:	HCCS/39/18
DATE:	7 June 2018
LEAD:	Sioned Wyn Davies, Monitoring Officer
CONTACT OFFICER:	Linda Roberts, Deputy Monitoring Officer (Tel: 292221)
SUBJECT:	Whistleblowing Policy
WARD:	N/A

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 This report is submitted in accordance with the Council's Whistleblowing Policy which contains a requirement that the Monitoring Officer bring a report to the Standards Committee at least once a year on the operation of the Policy and any changes in practice introduced as a result of concerns raised under the Policy.

2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 2.1 The Standards Committee last received a report on the operation of the Whistleblowing Policy on 5 July 2017.
- 2.2 The number and nature of concerns raised do not give rise to any significant corporate concerns.

3 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 That the Standards Committee considers the contents of the report.**

REASON FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

To fulfil the Standards Committee function of overseeing the Council's Whistleblowing regime.

4. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 4.1 The Standards Committee last received a report on the operation of the Whistleblowing Policy at its meeting on 5 July 2017 when it was reported that two concerns had been raised over the previous reporting period.
- 4.2 During the period since the Standards Committee last received a report on the operation of the Policy seven concerns have been reported, summarised as follows:

Department	Outcome
Environment and Planning	Following initial investigations, no evidence to warrant a full investigation.
Children's Social Care	Independent investigation carried out. Process reviewed and found to be robust; some improvements in communications implemented.
Children's Social Care	Following initial consideration, the concern was dealt with as an employment matter.
Children's Social Care	Independent investigation carried out. No evidence to substantiate further action. Review of processes recommended and followed up.
Adult Social Care	Anonymous concern raised. No evidence to move forward with investigation.
Environment and Planning	Anonymous concern received and consideration is ongoing.
Environment and Planning	Following an initial review, the concern has been substantiated and steps have been agreed to address the issues identified.

- 4.3 In accordance with the Whistleblowing Policy, the Head of Corporate and Customer Services reviews all concerns and outcomes on a periodic basis to ensure that they have been investigated in accordance with the Policy.
- 4.4 Awareness raising has continued with items included in the Friday Bulletin circulated to all staff. An item was included on 6 October 2017 and more recently on 18 May 2018. The text of the Bulletins is attached at Appendix 1 for information.

5. IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 **Policy Framework** – A strong ethical framework and governance arrangements supports the Council Plan objective of building an efficient and effective organisation that can best support local well-being. The work of the Standards Committee in overseeing the Whistleblowing policy is an essential part of that framework.
- 5.2 **Budget** – There are no immediate budgetary implications arising from this report.
- 5.3 **Legal** – There are no specific legal implications arising from this report.
- 5.4 **Staffing** – There are no specific staffing implications arising from this report.

5.5 Equality/Human Rights –

Members are advised of their duty to consider the full Equality Impact Assessment which is available at <http://vmwinsqld/equalityisalive/Menu.aspx> report number CCS/EIA00028/2014. Members of the public can request a copy of the full Equality Impact Assessment from the Contact Officer named in the header box of this report. There are no specific implications arising from this report. Any concerns raised under the Whistleblowing Policy giving rise to equalities and/or human rights issues would be considered and addressed in connection with those individual concerns and associated investigations.

5.6 **Risks** – In the absence of a robust and effective Whistleblowing Policy and Procedure with which employees and third parties engaging with the Council are familiar, there is a risk that concerns about malpractice will not come to the attention of the Council. It is essential that employees understand that they will be protected if they raise a concern in the reasonable belief that their report is made in the public interest.

6. CONSULTATION

6.1 There has been no consultation in respect of this report.

BACKGROUND PAPERS	LOCATION	WEBSITE INFO.
Whistleblowing Policy	Intranet (SAM)/ Internet	http://www.wrexham.gov.uk/english/council/documents/whistle_blowing_policy.htm http://www.wrexham.gov.uk/welsh/council_w/documents/whistle_blowing_policy.htm http://www.internal.wrexham.gov.uk/wordpress/sam/departments/corporate-and-customer-services/human-resources/whistleblowing-policy/ https://www.wrexham.gov.uk/assets/pdfs/key_docs/whistleblowing_policy.pdf