**What is whistleblowing?**

Whistleblowing is the exposing of any kind of activity or information that is deemed illegal, unethical, or not correct within an organisation that is either private or public.

**Why have a whistleblowing policy?**

The policy is intended to encourage and enable individuals to raise serious concerns within the Council rather than overlooking the issue or raising them outside the organisation.

**Who does the Whistleblowing policy apply to?**

The policy applies to all employees and workers, including agency staff, workers who are self-employed, sub-contractors and workers employed by an outsourced contractor providing Council services.

**When should the policy be used?**

This policy is intended to cover concerns which are in the public interest and should be used to assist individuals who have serious concerns, or believe they have discovered malpractice or impropriety within the Council.

It is restricted to the following areas of malpractice:

* A criminal offence;
* A failure or likely failure to comply with any legal obligation;
* A miscarriage of justice;
* Putting health and safety of any individual in danger;
* Damage to the environment; or
* Deliberate concealment relating to any of the above.

**When should the policy not to be used?**

It should not be used to reconsider matters which have already been addressed by other policies, for example Managing Bullying and Harassment; Managing Discipline; Managing Grievances.

**How does legislation and the policy protect the whistleblowing employee?**

Legislation, which is reflected in the Council’s whistleblowing policy, gives legal protection to individuals against being dismissed or penalised by their employer as a result of publicly disclosing certain serious concerns. These provisions ensure that no-one should be disadvantaged in raising legitimate concerns.

Protection is provided as long as the disclosure is made:

* With a reasonable belief it is in the public interest;
* With a reasonable belief that the act has taken or will take place and it is disclosed to an appropriate person;
* With compliance to the provisions of the Whistleblowing procedure.

**Do I have to reveal my identity when whistleblowing?**

Usually this is the case, though you can tell your employer or a prescribed person anonymously. However, they may not be able to take the claim further if you haven’t provided all the information they need. You can give your name but request confidentiality - the person or body you tell should make every effort to protect your identity.

**When does the policy not protect the whistleblowing employee?**

The individual won’t be protected for whistleblowing if:

* The law is broken when making a disclosure;
* The information is protected under legal professional privilege (e.g. if the information was disclosed for the purpose of obtaining legal advice).