

TONBRIDGE & MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL

GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

01 February 2016

Report of the Director of Finance and Transformation

Part 1- Public

Delegated

1 ANNUAL REVIEW OF WHISTLEBLOWING POLICY

This report informs Members of the outcome of the annual review of the Council's Whistleblowing Policy.

1.1 Introduction

1.1.1 The Whistleblowing Policy provides employees and Members with information about how they may report concerns regarding breaches of laws, regulations, policies or procedures committed by other employees or Members of the Council. It also outlines how the Council will deal with those concerns once they have been reported.

1.2 Whistleblowing Policy

1.2.1 The Whistleblowing Policy was last reviewed by the Committee in June 2015. This latest review found that other than some minor textual changes no substantive changes were required to the policy.

1.2.2 A copy of the Whistleblowing Policy is attached at **[Annex 1]**.

1.3 Action Following Approval of the Policy

1.3.1 The Whistleblowing Policy was considered at the meeting of the Audit Committee on 25 January and a verbal update of the outcome of that consideration will be given at the meeting. The policy, once approved, will be circulated to all staff with computer access using Netconsent and made available on the Council website.

1.4 Legal Implications

1.4.1 The policy is not mandatory, but does comply with best practice and refer to the relevant legislation where appropriate.

1.5 Financial and Value for Money Considerations

- 1.5.1 Providing clear guidelines to staff on how they may report concerns of inappropriate conduct or fraud strengthen the Council's zero tolerance approach to fraud and corruption.

1.6 Risk Assessment

- 1.6.1 While there is no statutory requirement to have an appropriate mechanism for dealing with whistleblowing, it is relevant to helping the Council comply with associated law. Failure to have an adequate whistleblowing mechanism carries significant reputational risks.

1.7 Equality Impact Assessment

- 1.7.1 The decisions recommended through this paper have a remote or low relevance to the substance of the Equality Act. There is no perceived impact on end users.

1.8 Recommendations

- 1.8.1 Members are asked to approve, subject to any required amendments, the Whistleblowing Policy attached at **[Annex 1]**.

Background papers:

contact: Samantha Buckland

Nil

Sharon Shelton
Director of Finance and Transformation