

## **Report of the Head of Legal Services**

### **Review of the Whistleblowing Policy**

#### **Purpose of report**

1. To report on the review of the Authority's Whistleblowing Policy.
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#### **Recommendation**

***It is recommended that the revised Whistleblowing Policy be noted.***

#### **Introduction and Background**

2. A key element of the Authority's governance framework is to create an environment in which staff, contractors and the public feel able to report any concerns they may have about improper conduct and to be confident their concerns will be investigated without fear of reprisal. The Whistleblowing Policy is designed to meet that requirement.
3. In addition to the requirements for good governance, the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998 (PIDA) protects employees against unfair dismissal or victimisation where they make a 'protected disclosure' within the meaning of the Act. The other purpose behind the Whistleblowing Policy is therefore to provide the mechanisms and safeguards to give staff the confidence to raise matters in-house at an early stage.

#### **Review of the Whistleblowing Policy**

4. The Audit and Standards Committee has responsibility to formulate and approve policy documentation in relation to Whistleblowing and to review the effectiveness of the policy throughout the Authority. The policy has recently been reviewed and the revised policy is attached at Appendix 1 and has been updated to reflect statutory changes.
5. Staff and others who work with the Authority will be made aware of the revision to the policy via the staff bulletin and maintaining awareness with those who may contract with the Authority.

#### **Conclusion/Summary**

6. The Whistleblowing Policy is an important element in our approach to corporate governance as it facilitates the effective scrutiny of conduct within the organisation. A key element of the Authority's governance framework is to create an environment in which staff, contractors and the public feel able to report any concerns they may have about improper conduct and to be confident

their concerns will be investigated without fear of reprisal. The Whistleblowing Policy is designed to meet that requirement.

### Corporate Considerations

<b>Resource Implications</b> (identify any financial, legal, property or human resources issues)	None
<b>Strategic Policy Links</b> (identify how proposals link in with current priorities and policy framework and if they do not, identify any potential implications).	Adhering to principles of good governance underpins delivery of 'Our Strategy'
<b>Risk Management / Health &amp; Safety</b> (identify any risks, the proposed control measures and risk evaluation scores).	None
<b>Consultation</b> (identify any public or other consultation that has been carried out on this matter)	None
<b>Equalities</b> (has an Equalities Impact Assessment been completed? If not, why not?)	An equalities impact assessment form has not been completed as the revised Whistleblowing Policy follows statutory requirements.

### Supporting Information

Appendix 1 – Revised Whistleblowing Policy

Background papers:

- Audit and Standards report 18 January 2016
- Code of Corporate Governance
- Annual Governance Statement
- Enterprise and Regulatory Reform Act 2013

### Contact Officer

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