

Agenda Item No: **Report No:**

Report Title: **Whistleblowing Policy and Anti Fraud and Corruption Strategy**

Report To: **Employment Committee** **Date: 15 February 2010**

Ward(s) Affected: **All**

Report By: **Head of Business Services**

Contact Officer(s): **John Clark, Head of Business Services**
David Heath, Head of Audit and Performance

Purpose of Report:

To update the Council's Whistleblowing Policy and Anti Fraud and Corruption Strategy.

Officers Recommendation(s):

- 1 To agree the revised Whistleblowing Policy and the Anti Fraud and Corruption Strategy
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Information

Whistleblowing Policy

- 1 The Public Interest Disclosure Act (PIDA) 1998 came into force in July 1999. The Act offers a framework of protection against victimisation or dismissal for workers who disclose (*blow the whistle on*) criminal behaviour or other defined forms of wrongdoing at their work place. In November 1999, the Council included its own guidance on Whistleblowing in the Staff Guide. This guidance has been regularly updated, and a revised version is attached at Appendix A. The revised version reflects a small number of recent changes to clarify reporting arrangements. The changes are shown in underlined italics.
- 2 The Lead Officer for this policy is the Head of Business Services. No cases have been reported under the Whistleblowing arrangements. Council staff have in the past shown themselves aware of the ways in which they can raise their concerns about possible misconduct, and so it is thought likely that the absence of reported cases is a fair reflection of the actual position.

Anti Fraud and Corruption Strategy

- 3 The Council has included an Anti Fraud and Corruption Strategy in the Staff Guide since October 1995. This guidance has been regularly updated, and a revised version is attached at Appendix B. The revised version reflects a small number of recent changes to clarify reporting arrangements and emphasise the

Council's zero tolerance to fraud and corruption. The changes are shown in underlined italics.

- 4 The Lead Officer for this strategy is the Head of Audit and Performance. Cases reported to Heads of Department under the Anti Fraud and Corruption Strategy are required to be notified to the Director of Finance and Community Services, who in turn passes the cases to Internal Audit for appropriate investigation.
- 5 Since March 2006, there have been three cases reported. Of these, one case was reported by Council staff, one case was reported by a councillor and one case was as a result of allegations made by a member of the public.
- 6 One of cases was not subject to a full investigation because it dealt with a straightforward theft of cash by a member of the public which resulted in immediate Police action. In one case the allegations were found to be unproven, although the investigation resulted in changes to Council procedures. The remaining case resulted in disciplinary action against Council staff.

Appendices

Appendix A – Whistleblowing Policy

Appendix B – Anti Fraud and Corruption Strategy