

SUBJECT:	WHISTLEBLOWING POLICY AND GUIDANCE REVIEW
MEETING:	GOVERNANCE AND AUDIT COMMITTEE
DATE:	SEPTEMBER 2026

1. PURPOSE:

The purpose of this report is to provide the Governance and Audit Committee with information in relation to the current review of Monmouthshire County Council's Whistleblowing Policy and Guidance.

2. RECOMMENDATION:

That the Committee supports the revised and reformatted versions of Monmouthshire County Council's Whistleblowing Policy and Guidance documents, enabling the documents to be approved and subsequent communication to be shared with all employees, to raise awareness.

3. KEY ISSUES:

All Monmouthshire County Council's HR policy and guidance documents have been reviewed and transferred to a revised format and structure, in the past 18 months, or are due to be reviewed and transferred by the end of October 2026. The purpose of this is to ensure that the information available in Monmouthshire County Council's HR policies is more concise, accessible and focussed, and by expanding the content in Monmouthshire County Council HR guidance documents, this is then more relevant and supportive of colleagues and people leaders, at varying stages of employment related processes. It is hoped that this revised approach will enable colleagues and people leaders to find employment related processes easier to navigate and subsequently apply to circumstances they are experiencing.

Monmouthshire County Council's Whistleblowing Policy was last reviewed and updated in 2024. The current review commenced in May 2026, and consultation has been undertaken with relevant officers and trade union representatives, including presentation and discussion at the Joint Advisory Group meeting on Monday 6th July 2026, as outlined in the version control tables in the policy and guidance documents. The following amendments were made to the Whistleblowing Policy and Guidance documents, following consultation:

- Including reference to additional legislation
- Replacing the term "in good faith" with "reasonable belief and public interest"

- Adding new sections on protected disclosures (including a list of external contacts with an explanation of legal conditions), “Acting on Suspensions” and Data Protection and Security
- Making it clearer that the Designated Officer should contact Human Resources, in the first instance of a concern being raised, for advice on the process to be followed
- Including a caveat on timescales to complete investigations (i.e. indicative timescales)
- Referring to malicious complaints potentially resulting in disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal
- Providing a more detailed explanation around anonymous complaints and confidentiality.

4. REASONS:

Monmouthshire County Council and school governing bodies expect the highest standards of conduct from all employees and therefore encourage employees and others with serious concerns about any aspect of the Council/school’s work to come forward and voice those concerns in a safe environment.

In line with the Council’s commitment to openness and accountability, employees are encouraged to raise concerns. Such concerns will be taken seriously, investigated and appropriate action taken in response. The Whistleblowing Policy and Guidance are designed to ensure that concerns about wrongdoing or malpractice can be raised without fear of victimisation, subsequent discrimination, disadvantage or dismissal.

The policy and guidance aim to:

- Encourage an individual to feel confident to raise a serious concern at the earliest opportunity
- Provide a route for an individual to raise concerns and to receive feedback on any action taken
- Provide reassurance that an individual will be protected from reprisals or victimisation, if they have made a disclosure in good faith.

5. BACKGROUND PAPERS:

None

6. AUTHOR:

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