

<b>SUBJECT:</b>	<b>WHISTLEBLOWING ANNUAL REPORT</b>
<b>MEETING:</b>	<b>GOVERNANCE AND AUDIT COMMITTEE</b>
<b>DATE:</b>	<b>JUNE 2026</b>

### **1. PURPOSE:**

The purpose of this report is to provide the Governance and Audit Committee with information in relation to whistleblowing practices and the number of whistleblowing cases in Monmouthshire County Council from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2025 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2026. This report is provided on an annual basis.

### **2. RECOMMENDATION:**

That the Committee notes the information, takes consequent assurance of the effectiveness of Monmouthshire County Council's whistleblowing practices, and supports the review of the current Whistleblowing Policy and Employee Code of Conduct.

### **3. KEY ISSUES:**

All 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 next review has commenced, and it is intended that this will be completed by July 2026. Monmouthshire County Council's Employee Code of Conduct was last reviewed and updated in 2024. It is intended that the next review will be completed by September 2026, to include specific reference to the Corporate Code of Governance, as part of Monmouthshire County Council's approach to meeting Principle 1 of this Code: Behaving with Integrity, Demonstrating Strong Commitment to Ethical Values, and Respecting the Rule of Law. Policy and Guidance reviews

are supported with appropriate communication to colleagues and an associated training provision.

Whistleblowing is defined as:

‘The action someone takes to report wrongdoing at work that affects others’ ([The law - Whistleblowing at work - Acas 2026](#)).

A record of all whistleblowing cases is held centrally, in a secure location.

Over the period 1st April 2025 to 31st March 2026, the information in relation to the number of whistleblowing cases in Monmouthshire County Council is as follows:

NUMBER OF CASES	SUBJECT MATTER (CONFIDENTIAL)	ACTION TAKEN
2	Employee Conduct	Investigations concluded and consequent recommendations implemented (including following formal HR policies)

The data for 1st April 2025 to 31st March 2026 can be compared to the number of whistleblowing cases over the previous 4 years, reported on a financial year basis:

YEAR	NUMBER OF CASES	SUBJECT MATTER (CONFIDENTIAL)	ACTION TAKEN
2024-2025	1	Employee Conduct	Investigation concluded and consequent recommendations implemented
2023-2024	0	N/A	N/A
2022-2023	1	Safeguarding	Investigation concluded and consequent recommendations implemented
2021-2022	1	Employee Conduct	Investigation concluded and formal HR policies followed consequently

The above tables show that in the last 5 years, Monmouthshire County Council has dealt with 5 cases of whistleblowing.

The existence of whistleblowing cases, and the evidence that they are reported, investigated and concluded, provides assurance that current arrangements are understood and are operating in practice. It also demonstrates that there are accessible routes for colleagues to raise concerns and that the Council’s processes can identify issues and deliver appropriate outcomes where required.

#### 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 is designed to ensure that concerns about wrongdoing or malpractice can be raised without fear of victimisation, subsequent discrimination, disadvantage or dismissal.

The policy aims 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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