

SUBJECT: Whistleblowing Policy

MEETING: CABINET

DATE: June 2017

DIVISION/WARDS AFFECTED: All

1. PURPOSE:

The purpose of this report is to provide a revised Whistleblowing Policy which is applicable to all employees including those based in schools.

This revised policy will replace the current Whistleblowing policy.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

That the revised Whistleblowing Policy be accepted and circulated to all staff and commended to governing bodies for adoption as soon as possible.

3. KEY ISSUES:

The current Whistleblowing Policy was last updated in 2013 and now needs to be revised.

Whistleblowing is defined as:

‘The disclosure by an employee or professional of confidential information which relates to some danger, fraud or other illegal or unethical conduct connected with the work place, be it of the employee or his/her fellow employees’ (Public Concern at Work Guidelines 1997).

Statutory protection for employees who whistle blow is provided by the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998 (“PIDA”). The PIDA protects employees against victimisation if they make a protected disclosure within the meaning of the PIDA and speak out about concerns around conduct or practice within the Council/ school which is potentially illegal, corrupt, improper, unsafe and unethical or which amounts to malpractice.

The policy helps to ensure that the Council / School Governing Body is committed to achieving the highest possible standards of service and the highest possible ethical standards in public life and in all of its practices and will treat whistleblowing as a serious matter and in line with the Councils/ Governing Body’s commitment to openness, probity and accountability, employees are encouraged to raise concerns which will be taken seriously, investigated and appropriate action taken in response.

The policy is designed to ensure that concerns can be raised about wrongdoing or malpractice within the Council/ School without fear of victimisation, subsequent discrimination, disadvantage or dismissal.

The policy aims to:

- Encourage an individual(s) to feel confident in raising serious concerns at the earliest opportunity and to question and act upon concerns about practice
- Provide avenues for an individual to raise those concerns and receive feedback on any action taken
- Ensure that an individual receives a response to concerns raised and that an individual is aware of process if not satisfied
- Provide reassurance that an individual will be protected from possible reprisals or victimisation if a disclosure is made in good faith and within the meaning of the PIDA.

4. REASONS:

In this policy 'Whistleblowing' means the reporting by employees of suspected misconduct, illegal acts or failure to act within the Council or School.

Monmouthshire County Council and School Governing Bodies expect the highest standards of conduct from all employees, and 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. This policy enables employees to raise concerns at an early stage and in the correct way.

5. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS:

None

6. SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS:

The Equality Impact Assessment is attached.

7. CONSULTEES:

All recognised trade unions.

Head-teachers

8. BACKGROUND PAPERS: None

9. AUTHOR:

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