

# Audit and Governance Committee



Date of meeting:	27 September 2021
Title of Report:	<b>Updated Whistleblowing Policy</b>
Lead Member:	Councillor Nick Kelly (Leader)
Lead Strategic Director:	Brendan Arnold (Service Director for Finance)
Author:	Brenda Davis, Audit Manager
Contact Email:	brenda.davis@plymouth.gov.uk
Your Reference:	AUD/BD
Key Decision:	No
Confidentiality:	Part I - Official

## Purpose of Report

An updated Whistleblowing Policy was last approved by the Audit and Governance Committee in December 2018 and that policy has now been subject to a further refresh.

The Whistleblowing Policy applies to all employees and Councillors of Plymouth City Council, including temporary and agency staff and is intended to encourage and enable individuals to raise serious concerns within the Council rather than overlooking a problem.

To align with the align with the Modern Slavery Policy which went before Cabinet on 10 August 2021 and says, "The Council will support its staff to blow the whistle on any suspected examples of modern slavery". Section 2.3 has been updated to clarify that if an individual has cause to suspect modern slavery, this is within the scope of the Whistleblowing Policy.

There are some textual changes to the policy to provide greater clarity and where references have changed. All insertions are shown in red font with deletions lined through.

## Recommendations and Reasons

The Audit and Governance Committee:

- Note the changes and approve the updated Whistleblowing Policy.

## Alternative options considered and rejected

None. The Authority needs to maintain and promote the Whistleblowing Policy to comply with best practice and to ensure a high level of awareness of, and confidence in, the Council's whistleblowing arrangements.

## Relevance to the Corporate Plan and/or the Plymouth Plan

The Whistleblowing Policy supports the Council's values through the promotion of good governance and can play an important role in deterring and detecting malpractice, maintaining public trust and, delivering the Council's ambitions to being democratic, responsible and fair.

## Implications for the Medium Term Financial Plan and Resource Implications:

None

**Carbon Footprint (Environmental) Implications:**

None

**Other Implications: e.g. Health and Safety, Risk Management, Child Poverty:**

\* When considering these proposals members have a responsibility to ensure they give due regard to the Council's duty to promote equality of opportunity, eliminate unlawful discrimination and promote good relations between people who share protected characteristics under the Equalities Act and those who do not.

None. The Whistleblowing Policy encourages individuals to raise serious concerns within the Council rather than overlooking a problem. This policy is intended to cover reasonably serious concerns that fall outside the scope of other procedures.

**Appendices**

\*Add rows as required to box below

Ref.	Title of Appendix	Exemption Paragraph Number (if applicable) <i>If some/all of the information is confidential, you must indicate why it is not for publication by virtue of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 by ticking the relevant box.</i>						
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7
A	Whistleblowing Policy – Updated Aug '21							
B	EIA – Whistleblowing Policy 2021							

**Background papers:**

\*Add rows as required to box below

Please list all unpublished, background papers relevant to the decision in the table below. Background papers are unpublished works, relied on to a material extent in preparing the report, which disclose facts or matters on which the report or an important part of the work is based.

Title of any background paper(s)	Exemption Paragraph Number (if applicable) <i>If some/all of the information is confidential, you must indicate why it is not for publication by virtue of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 by ticking the relevant box.</i>						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

**Sign off:**

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Originating Senior Leadership Team member: Brendan Arnold (Service Director for Finance)											
Please confirm the Strategic Director(s) has agreed the report? Date agreed: 01/09/2021											
Cabinet Member approval: Cllr Nick Kelly (Leader)											
Date approved: 06/09/2021											