

## HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

<b>Committee:</b>	Audit Committee
<b>Date:</b>	4 March 2021
<b>Title:</b>	Policy Update - Whistleblowing
<b>Report From:</b>	Carolyn Williamson, Deputy Chief Executive and Director of Corporate Resources

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### **Purpose of this Report**

1. The purpose of this report is to inform the Audit Committee that the Whistleblowing Policy has been updated in relation to matters raised directly to Members. The policy is appended for information.

### **Recommendation(s)**

2. The Committee note the amendment to the Whistleblowing Policy and the inclusion of Whistleblowing within Governance Briefings following the election.

### **Contextual information**

3. The Whistleblowing Policy was updated in December 2020 as part of a regular review. The policy provides for individuals to raise a Whistleblowing issue to an Elected Member. Clarification was sought on the next steps for an Elected Member in such circumstances.
4. In this circumstance, the Elected Member should contact the Monitoring Officer, and this has been added to the Whistleblowing Policy that will be published following this Audit Committee. The additional wording is highlighted in the copy of the policy appended to this report.
5. Further, the Monitoring Officer will ensure matters relating to Whistleblowing are included as part of the Governance Briefing following the election.

### **Conclusions**

6. The amendment to the Whistleblowing Policy and inclusion of the matter during the Governance Briefing will provide Members with key steps to take, should the matter arise.

**REQUIRED CORPORATE AND LEGAL INFORMATION:**

**Links to the Strategic Plan**

<b>Hampshire maintains strong and sustainable economic growth and prosperity:</b>	No
<b>People in Hampshire live safe, healthy and independent lives:</b>	No
<b>People in Hampshire enjoy a rich and diverse environment:</b>	No
<b>People in Hampshire enjoy being part of strong, inclusive communities:</b>	No

**Other Significant Links**

<b>Links to previous Member decisions</b>	
<u>Title</u> None	<u>Date</u>
<b>Direct links to specific legislation or Government Directives</b>	
<u>Title</u> The Public Interest Disclosure Act	<u>Date</u> 1998

<b>Section 100 D - Local Government Act 1972 - background documents</b>	
<p>The following documents discuss facts or matters on which this report, or an important part of it, is based and have been relied upon to a material extent in the preparation of this report. (NB: the list excludes published works and any documents which disclose exempt or confidential information as defined in the Act.)</p>	
<u>Document</u>	<u>Location</u>
None	

## **EQUALITIES IMPACT ASSESSMENT:**

### **1. Equality Duty**

The County Council has a duty under Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 ('the Act') to have due regard in the exercise of its functions to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by or under the Act with regard to the protected characteristics as set out in section 4 of the Act (age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation);
- Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic within section 149(7) of the Act (age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation) and those who do not share it;
- Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic within section 149(7) of the Act (see above) and persons who do not share it.

Due regard in this context involves having due regard in particular to:

- The need to remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic that are connected to that characteristic;
- Take steps to meet the needs of persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of persons who do not share it;
- Encourage persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.

### **2. Equalities Impact Assessment:**

Equality objectives are not considered to be adversely affected by proposals in this report.