

## AUDIT COMMITTEE

<b>Date of Meeting</b>	Friday, 15 February 2019
<b>Report Subject</b>	Whistleblowing Policy
<b>Cabinet Member</b>	Not Applicable
<b>Report Author</b>	Internal Audit Manager
<b>Type of Report</b>	Assurance

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Whistleblowing Policy enables employees, Members, and third party individuals (partners, consultants, suppliers, contractors, including their employees) of the Council to raise any concerns that they have and gives assurance about confidentiality and protection. It details the procedure to follow in raising a concern and details how the Council will respond. The policy provides examples of the types of concerns that can be raised.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

1	The Committee is requested to consider and approve the updated Whistleblowing Policy.
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### REPORT DETAILS

<b>1.00</b>	<b>EXPLAINING THE INTERNAL AUDIT PROGRESS REPORT</b>
1.01	Flintshire County Council has had a Whistleblowing Policy since 2002 and it was last reviewed and approved by Audit Committee in 2015. There is a need to review the policy periodically to ensure that it reflects any changes in working practices, legislations and other regulations.
1.02	This document has been reviewed and updated by Internal Audit in conjunction with Governance and Human Resources and Organisation Development.
1.03	As the review in 2015 of the Whistleblowing policy took place to bring it in line with the requirements of the Enterprise and Regulatory Reform Act 2013, there has been very few changes to the policy apart from bringing it

	<p>up to date with current terminology, contact details and the movement of some sections within the policy.</p> <p>One aspect of the policy that has been expanded on is to reflect the actions the Council has committed to regarding Welsh Government's Ethical Procurement Practices.</p> <p>The policy clearly informs third party individuals (partners, consultants, suppliers, contractors and employees of Council suppliers and contractors, who are employed to deliver a service / goods to the Council) of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• their responsibilities to report any concerns whether this is against the Council or the supplier / contractor (sections 5.4, 5.6 and 13.2 of the policy);</li> <li>• the process to follow to raise any concerns (section 8.2 of the policy);</li> <li>• examples of the types of concerns that may be raised e.g. unethical employment practices. (Appendix A of the policy).</li> </ul>
1.04	To aid clarity and transparency two copies of the Whistleblowing Policy are included. Appendix A shows where the changes have occurred, with the tracked changes, whilst Appendix B shows the revised Whistleblowing Policy without the changes tracked, which is an easier read.
1.05	The Whistleblowing policy has been shared with the Chief Executive, Chief Officer - Governance, Senior Officer – Human Resources & Organisational Development and is currently with the Trade Union for review. Given that there has been few changes to the policy, it was decided to continue to bring the policy to the Audit Committee for approval. Should changes be required following a review by the Trade Union, the policy will be brought back to the Committee for further consideration and approval.
1.06	This policy forms part of the Council's Constitution. Following approval by the Audit Committee it will be presented to the Constitution and Democratic Services Committee.
1.07	Following approval, it will also be re-launched on the Council's website, infonet, shared with members and new suppliers / contractors of the Council. The policy will be bilingual.

<b>2.00</b>	<b>RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS</b>
2.01	None as a direct result of this report.

<b>3.00</b>	<b>CONSULTATIONS REQUIRED / CARRIED OUT</b>
3.01	Consultation of the revised Whistleblowing Policy has been undertaken with Audit Committee members, the Chief Executive, the Council's Monitoring Officer and Chief Officer, Governance, Trade Unions and the Senior Manager, Human Resources and Organisational Development.

<b>4.00</b>	<b>RISK MANAGEMENT</b>
4.01	None from the report itself.

<b>5.00</b>	<b>APPENDICES</b>
5.01	Appendix A – Draft 2019 Whistleblowing Policy – With Tracked Changes Appendix B – Draft 2019 Whistleblowing Policy – Without Tracked Changes

<b>6.00</b>	<b>LIST OF ACCESSIBLE BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS</b>
6.01	<b>Contact Officer:</b> Lisa Brownbill, Internal Audit Manager <b>Telephone:</b> 01352 702231 <b>E-mail:</b> Lisa.brownbill@flintshire.gov.uk

<b>7.00</b>	<b>GLOSSARY OF TERMS</b>
7.01	<b>Whistleblowing:</b> the term used (and process to follow) when an individual passes on information concerning a wrongdoing.