

Meeting date: 9th January 2023

Report to: Audit Committee

Report title: Draft Whistleblowing Policy

Report from: Head of Audit Services

Report author/lead contact officer: Zoe Covington - Counter Fraud Lead

Wards affected:

All Wards | Bickenhill | Blythe | Castle Bromwich | Chelmsley Wood |
 Dorridge/Hockley Heath | Elmdon | Kingshurst/Fordbridge | Knowle |
 Lyndon | Meriden | Olton | Shirley East | Shirley South |
 Shirley West | Silhill | Smith's Wood | St Alphege

Public/private report: Public

Exempt by virtue of paragraph: N/A

1. Executive Summary

1.1 To inform the Audit Committee of the proposed new Whistleblowing Policy, for comment and endorsement.

2. Decision(s) Recommended

2.1 The Audit Committee are asked to note the new wording of the Policy, identifying any areas where they wish to receive further information or explanation from Audit Services.

2.2 The Audit Committee are asked to endorse the draft Policy, pending final approval by the Governance Committee.

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3. Matters for Consideration

- 3.1 Protect (previously known as Public Concern at Work) is the UK’s whistleblowing charity. SMBC is a member of Protect and this policy is based on Protect’s best practice policy template.
- 3.2 Protect recently advised their member organisations that many Whistleblowing Policies had become more like technical/procedural manuals than a supportive, simple document aimed at all readers. In response to this, the new draft policy is deliberately brief. It focusses on being user friendly and inclusive, while still providing all the key information needed to enable and encourage people to raise a concern.
- 3.3 This draft Policy has already been shared with the following, for input and endorsement: HR, CLT, Policy and Procedures.

4. What options have been considered and what is the evidence telling us about them?

- 4.1 Not applicable for this report.

5. Reasons for recommending preferred option

- 5.1 Not applicable for this report.

6. Implications and Considerations

- 6.1 State how the proposals in this report contribute to the priorities in the [Council Plan](#):

Priority:	Contribution:
People and Communities: 1. Improving outcomes for children and young people in Solihull. 2. Good quality, responsive, and dignified care and support for Adults in Solihull when they need it. 3. Take action to improve life chances and health outcomes in our most disadvantaged communities. 4. Enable communities to thrive.	See Section 3
Economy: 5. Develop and promote the borough’s economy, with a focus on revitalising our town and local centres. 6. Maximising the opportunities of UK Central and HS2.	See Section 3

Priority:	Contribution:
7. Increase the supply of affordable and social housing that is environmentally sustainable.	
Environment: 8. Enhance our natural environment, improve air quality and reduce net carbon emissions.	See Section 3
9. Promote employee wellbeing	See Section 3

6.2 Consultation and Scrutiny:

6.2.1 Not applicable for this report.

6.3 Financial implications:

6.3.1 Not applicable for this report.

6.4 Legal implications:

6.4.1 Not applicable for this report.

6.5 Risk implications, including Risk Appetite:

6.5.1 Not applicable for this report.

6.6 Equality implications:

6.6.1 Not applicable for this report.

6.7 Linkages to our work with the West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA), Local Enterprise Partnership or the Birmingham & Solihull Integrated Care System (ICS):

6.7.1 Not applicable for this report.

7. List of appendices referred to

7.1 Draft Whistleblowing Policy

8. Background papers used to compile this report

8.1 Not applicable for this report.

9. List of Other Relevant Documents

9.1 Not applicable for this report.