

CITY OF YORK COUNCIL

WHISTLE-BLOWING POLICY

OVERVIEW

This document sets out how the Council implements the provisions of the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998 provides a framework to promote responsible whistleblowing by workers. This policy enables the City of York Council to comply with the provisions of the Act.
- 1.2 The Council is proud of its track record of probity and high ethical standards. However, we are not complacent and we recognise that malpractice can sometimes occur. The Council wants to encourage workers to raise any concerns they may have so that we can resolve matters, prevent risk and continue to deliver high quality services to the people of York. We recognise that workers may sometimes find it difficult to speak up due to fear of victimisation and that it can sometimes seem easier to ignore malpractice rather than report it.
- 1.3 City of York Council expects the highest standards of probity from all those who work for and with the Council. These standards are set out in the Council's Employee Code of Conduct. If you work for the Council, you have a responsibility to voice any concerns you have about malpractice so that appropriate action can be taken and we positively encourage you to do so. This policy encourages you to raise any concerns **within** the Council and protects you from victimisation for doing so.
- 1.4 The Council will not tolerate fraud or corruption in the administration of its responsibilities, whether perpetrated by Members, Officers, customers of its services, third party organisations contracting with it to provide goods and/or services, or other agencies with which it has any business dealings. If a member of staff suspects or knows of any impropriety, financial irregularity, fraud or corrupt practice, they must immediately report it.
- 1.5 If you work with vulnerable people or children you have a clear responsibility to report any abuse. Failure to do so may be considered a disciplinary offence.
- 1.6 A failure to report a money laundering offence is a criminal act in itself.
- 1.7 Members and senior management are responsible for ensuring compliance with this policy and the Council's legal obligations under the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998. They will receive an annual report from the Head of Human Resources outlining the number and

type of any concerns raised under the policy and how these have been resolved. They will not be provided with any further details that could identify individuals and confidentiality will be fully protected.

2.0 SCOPE

2.1 All those who work for the Council, whether permanent, casual, temporary employees or contractors can raise any concerns they may have under this policy. Elected Members and school governors can also raise concerns under this policy. Separate procedures are available for complaints from members of the public. This policy will be widely communicated throughout the Council.

2.2 There are other policies and procedures available for raising issues regarding employment and service matters and this policy is not intended to replace those. Examples include:

- Complaints of harassment or bullying between staff should be raised under the Council's Bullying & Harassment procedure;
- Complaints about pay and grading should be raised under the Council's Regrading Procedure;
- Complaints about other employment matters e.g. lack of promotion or training, should be raised under the Grievance Procedure.

2.3 This policy should only be used for serious malpractice within the Council as defined in the attached guidelines. The line manager of the service will deal with issues of a minor nature.

2.4 The Council has an established procedure on 'How to Safeguard Public Money', details of which are contained in the Whistleblowing Guidelines which supplement this policy.

2.5 The Council also has an established disclosure procedure relating to money laundering, details of which are contained in the Whistleblowing Guidelines which supplement this policy.

3.0 IMPLEMENTATION DATE

3.1 This policy and associated procedures will come into effect on 26th March 2007.