

Anti-Fraud and Corruption and Whistleblowing Policies

Standards Committee

Date: 29 January 2007

Author: Director of Law and Democratic Services (Monitoring Officer);
Head of Internal Audit

Wards Affected: All

Purpose

- To receive the updated Anti-Fraud and Corruption Policy and Whistleblowing Policy and to agree that it should be issued for consultation.

Recommendation

- It is recommended that relevant stakeholders be consulted on the updated Anti-Fraud and Corruption and Whistleblowing policies and that the policies be brought back to the next meeting of the Standards Committee in March 2007.

1. Reasons

- 1.1 To ensure that the Council's Policies on Anti-Fraud and Corruption and Whistleblowing are up-to-date and reflect best practice.

2. Detail

- 2.1 The Council controls millions of pounds of public money and takes very seriously the high expectations of the public and the degree of scrutiny to which the affairs of the Council are subject.
- 2.2 In carrying out its functions and responsibilities the Council wishes to promote a culture of openness and fairness and expects that elected members and employees at all levels will adopt the highest standards of propriety and accountability. Proper accountability, achieved through probity, internal control and honest administration is therefore essential.
- 2.3 The Anti-Fraud and Corruption Strategy sets out measures designed to frustrate any attempted fraudulent or corrupt acts and the steps to be taken if such action occurs.
- 2.4 The Council's Whistleblowing Policy supports the Anti-Fraud and Corruption Strategy, and makes it clear that concerns can be raised without the fear of reprisals. It is intended to encourage and enable employees, Members and Governors to raise serious concerns within the Council, irrespective of seniority, rank or status, rather than overlooking a problem or reporting the matter externally.

Further information on the subject of this report can be obtained from Stephen Taylor on Direct Dial: 463012 or Email staylor@swindon.gov.uk or Nick Hobbs on Direct Dial: 463940 or Email nhobbs@swindon.gov.uk

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- 2.5 Both the Anti-Fraud and Corruption Policy (Appendix 1) and the Whistleblowing Policy (Appendix 2) have been updated to ensure that they reflect changes in legislation and reflect best practice.
- 2.6 Consultation with relevant stakeholders i.e. staff, Unions, External Audit and any other interested parties will be carried out should the Standards Committee agree that the policies be issued for consultation, and both policies will then be brought back to Standards Committee for approval.

Alternative Options

- None

Risk Management

Financial and Procurement Implications

- There are no direct financial or procurement implications. The cost of carrying out any investigations is currently borne by the Director of Law and Democratic Services or the Head of Internal Audit's budget as appropriate.

Legal / Human Rights Implications

- The policies and procedures have been written to take account of the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998 and takes account of other relevant legislation such as the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000, the Local Government Act 1972 and the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2003.

Links to Corporate Plans and Policies (in particular to Swindon 2010 Promises)

- The outcome of complaints links with the theme 'Council for the Future' and the wish to improve the Council's performance and ensure that the Council's corporate governance system are considered to be accountable, effective and transparent (Objective 1).

Consultees

- The Director of Finance (Section 151 Officer) and Director of Law and Democratic Services (Monitoring Officer) are consulted in respect of all reports.
- Director of Human Resources
- Head of Internal Audit

Background Papers and Appendices

- Appendix 1: Anti-Fraud and Corruption Strategy
- Appendix 2: Whistleblowing Policy

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