

**STANDARDS COMMITTEE
25 JANUARY 2006**

Whistle Blowing and Anti-fraud and Corruption Policies – Progress Report and Implementation Plan

Purpose of Report

1. This report outlines the programme of work to be undertaken to strengthen the council's whistleblowing and anti-fraud and corruption policies and procedures.

Background

2. At their meeting in January 2005 the Standards Committee received a report on the council's whistleblowing arrangements. In subsequent conversations with the Audit Commission, it was agreed that the council's anti-fraud and corruption policy would also be reviewed and updated, to ensure that both policies are as effective as possible.
3. The council's arrangements for supporting whistleblowing and tackling fraud and corruption form a key line of enquiry in the new Use of Resources component of the Comprehensive Performance Assessment. The successful implementation of this project is therefore an important factor in ensuring that the council is able to demonstrate a tangible improvement in this area.

Progress

4. The Chief Auditor and the Corporate Standards Manager were asked to review the policies and implement any changes that were considered to be necessary. They re-drafted the policies, which were then approved by the Corporate Management Board in the spring of 2005.
5. Implementation of the new policies was delayed as a result of staff resource constraints. However, following the return of the Corporate Standards Manager from an external secondment, an implementation plan has been prepared. A copy of the plan is attached (Appendix 1). Implementation is on schedule.
6. The Chief Auditor and the Corporate Standards Manager have drafted procedures to accompany the re-drafted policies. Copies of the policies and procedures are attached (Appendix 2).

Environmental Impact of the Proposal

7. None

Risk Assessment

8. There is no risk involved in implementing the new policies. There is financial and reputational risk in not implementing the new policies, because there is an increased risk of fraud or serious misconduct not being detected and responded to

appropriately. The implementation of the enhanced whistleblowing and anti-fraud and corruption policies and procedures mitigate that risk.

Financial Implications

9. None

Options Considered

10. The Audit Commission has recommended the actions, so the option of taking no action to enhance the policies and procedures was not considered to be appropriate.

Recommendation

11. That members note the contents of this report, and receive a progress report at their meeting in December 2006.

STEPHEN GERRARD
Monitoring Officer

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The following unpublished documents have been relied on in the preparation of this Report: None