

**STANDARDS COMMITTEE**

**10 November 2008**

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**THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE WHISTLEBLOWING PROCEDURE**

**Purpose of this report**

1. To provide members with an update on the council's whistleblowing procedure.

**Background**

2. The Council introduced a new whistleblowing procedure in the summer of 2006.
3. It is within the remit of the Standards Committee to maintain an overview of the efficacy of that procedure.
4. The last report on the implementation of the procedure was brought to this committee in April 2007.

**Statistics and conclusions**

5. Since the last report brought to this Committee in April 2007, 15 concerns have been raised and logged as whistleblowing allegations. This includes a small number of complaints which, although not raised through the formal procedure, were investigated through that process because the person bringing the complaint had exhausted all other avenues of enquiry.
6. Of the 15 cases, all but two have been closed. These two cases are still the subject of investigations, and we await reports.
7. The steady number of allegations that have been brought forward suggests that the procedure is known and accessible to staff, and that they feel confident that they can use the procedure safely. This represents a significant contrast to the two years prior to the introduction of the new procedure, during which no whistleblowing cases were reported.
8. Where the investigation has concluded that remedial action was required, this has been taken.
9. The evidence is that at present, the whistleblowing procedure is successful.

## **Whistleblowing Arrangements for Wiltshire Council**

10. The increased size of Wiltshire Council may result in increased numbers of whistleblowing allegations being made. It is not proposed to amend the reporting mechanism nor the procedure, but increased numbers of investigations may have an adverse impact on capacity. Within the new council structure a Standards Team will be created and two full time Standards Officers will be appointed. Part of their remit will be to conduct investigations into whistleblowing allegations where it is appropriate for them to do so. They will be required to obtain the CIPFA Certificate in Investigative Practice, which will provide them with the necessary skills. These appointments should ensure that there is sufficient in-house capacity to address any increase in investigatory demand.

## **Environmental Impact**

11. None

## **Risk Assessment**

12. There are no risks associated with the recommendation in this report

## **Equalities and Legal Considerations**

13. There are no equalities or legal issues arising from the recommendation made in this report.

## **Financial Implications**

14. There is no cost associated with the recommendation made in this report.

## **Recommendation**

15. That members of the Committee note the contents of this report.

**STEPHEN GERRARD**  
**MONITORING OFFICER**

Report Author: Nina Wilton, Corporate Standards Manager