

WHISTLEBLOWING POLICY

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SECTION

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INTRODUCTION

1. Caerphilly County Borough Council is fully committed to running the organisation in the best possible way and to do so we need your help. We have introduced this policy to reassure you that it is safe and acceptable to speak up and to enable you to raise any concern you may have about malpractice at an early stage and in the right way.
2. All of us, at one time or another, have a concern about what is happening at work. Usually these are easily resolved. However, when the concern feels serious because it is about a possible fraud, danger or malpractice that might affect others or the organisation itself, it can be difficult to know what to do.

SCOPE OF THE SCHEME

3. This policy applies to all Council employees. If you are an agency worker, volunteer or contractor working on Council premises, including builders, drivers, and suppliers you should raise your concern with your Line Manager in the normal way.
4. The effective date of the policy is XXXX and this policy must be read in conjunction with all relevant Council policies and procedures, in particular the Council's Code of Conduct.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

5. This policy aims to reassure you that it is safe and acceptable to speak up and to enable you to raise serious concerns you have about malpractice at an early stage and in the right way.
6. If you raise a genuine concern under this policy, you will not be at risk of losing your job or suffering any form of detrimental treatment as a result.
7. The policy is specifically intended for raising concerns about malpractice. If, however, you wish to make a complaint about your employment or how you have been treated, please use the grievance procedure – copies can be obtained from your Manager or the HR Support Portal.
8. The policy provides you with an avenue to raise your concerns and to receive feedback on any action taken. Any feedback will be provided within the confines of the Data Protection Act 1998.

CATEGORIES OF WRONGDOING

9. You are protected under this policy to raise any concerns you may have about the following categories of wrongdoing:-
 - Criminal offences, including conduct which is an offence or a breach of law or sexual or physical abuse of clients;
 - Failure to comply with legal obligations including the unauthorised use of public funds, possible fraud and corruption;
 - Discrimination against the public or colleagues (e.g. racism, homophobia, etc)
 - Miscarriages of justice;
 - Dangers to health or safety including risks to the public as well as other employees;
 - Danger or damage to the environment or
 - Deliberate concealment of any of the above categories.
10. The policy may also be used to report something that:-
 - Makes you feel uncomfortable in terms of the standards you believe the Council subscribes to;
 - Is against the Council's Constitution and policies;
 - Falls below established standards of practice or
 - Amounts to improper conduct.

OUR ASSURANCE TO YOU

11. Caerphilly County Borough Council is committed to this policy. If you raise a genuine concern under this policy, you will not be at risk of losing your job or suffering any form of detrimental treatment as a result. The Council will not tolerate the harassment or victimisation of anyone raising a genuine concern and we consider it a disciplinary matter to victimise anyone who has raised a genuine concern.
12. With these assurances, we hope you will raise your concern openly. However, we recognise that there may be circumstances when you would prefer to speak to someone confidentially first. If this is the case, please say so at the outset.
13. If you ask us not to disclose your identity, we will not do so without your consent unless required by law. You should understand that there may be times when we are unable to resolve a concern without revealing your identity, for example where your personal evidence is essential. In such cases, we will discuss with you whether and how the matter can best proceed.

ANONYMOUS ALLEGATIONS

14. The policy encourages you to put your name to your allegation whenever possible. If you do not tell us who you are it will be much more difficult for us to look into the matter. We will not be able to protect your position or to give you feedback. Accordingly you should not assume we could provide the assurances we offer in the same way if you report a concern anonymously.
15. If you are unsure about raising a concern you can get independent advice from Public Concern at Work (contact details can be found under Independent Advice).

UNTRUE ALLEGATIONS

16. If you make an allegation in good faith but it is not confirmed by the investigation, no action will be taken against you. Provided you are raising a genuine concern, it does not matter if you are mistaken. Of course we do not extend this assurance to someone who maliciously raises a matter they know is untrue.
17. If you make an allegation maliciously or for personal gain, disciplinary action may be taken against you.

RAISING A CONCERN

18. You do not need to have firm evidence of malpractice before raising a concern. However, we do ask that you explain as fully as you can the information or circumstances that gave rise to your concern.
19. If you have a concern about malpractice the first step is to raise it with your manager or team leader. This may be done verbally or in writing. We understand that the ability to raise concerns in this way will depend on the nature of the concern and the individuals involved.
20. If you feel unable to raise the matter with your Manager, for whatever reason, please raise the matter with:-

Head of Workforce & Organisational Development
21. If you want to raise the matter confidentially, please say so at the outset so that appropriate arrangements can be made. A discussion will be held with you to discuss what is the most appropriate way to deal with the matter.

- 22 If these channels have been followed and you still have concerns, or if you feel that the matter is so serious that you cannot discuss it with any of the above, please contact:

Head of Legal and Monitoring Officer

Or

Section 151 Officer

HOW WE WILL HANDLE THE MATTER

- 23 The Council will acknowledge receipt of your concern within **10 working days**. We will assess it and consider what action may be appropriate. This may involve an informal review, an internal inquiry or a more formal investigation. We will tell you who will be handling the matter, how you can contact them, and what further assistance we may need from you, how we propose to handle it and provide a timetable for feedback. If we have misunderstood the concern or there is any information missing please let us know.
- 24 When you raise the concern it will be helpful to know how you think the matter might best be resolved. If you have any personal interest in the matter, we ask you to tell us at the outset.
- 25 If we think your concern falls more properly within one of our other policies (i.e. grievance) we will let you know.
- 26 If you are invited to a meeting to discuss your concerns, you can be accompanied by a trade union representative or work colleague not involved in the matter.
- 27 Whenever possible we will give you feedback on the outcome of any investigation. Please note, however, that we may not be able to tell you about the precise actions we take where this would infringe a duty of confidence we owe to another person. Any feedback will be provided within the confines of the Data Protection Act 1998.
- 28 While we cannot guarantee that we will respond to all matters in the way that you might wish, we will strive to handle the matter fairly and properly. By using this policy you will help us to achieve this.

INDEPENDENT ADVICE

- 29 If you are unsure whether to use this policy or you want confidential advice at any stage, you may contact the independent charity Public Concern at Work on 020 7404 6609 or by email at helpline@pcaw.org.uk. Their lawyers can talk you through your options and help raise a concern about malpractice at work.
- 30 If you are a member of a trade union you can also contact your union for advice.

EXTERNAL CONTACTS

31. While we hope this policy gives you the reassurance you need to raise your concern internally with us, we recognise that there may be circumstances where you can properly report a concern to an outside body. In fact, we would rather you raised a matter with the appropriate regulator than not at all. Public Concern at Work (or your union) will be able to advise you on such an option if you wish. Details of External Regulators under the Public Interest Disclosure (Prescribed Persons) Order 2014 can be found under Appendix 1. If this Schedule is amended by future legislation then the revised list will apply.
32. If you do take the matter outside the Council, you should ensure that you do not disclose personal or confidential information.

INTERPRETATION OF THE POLICY

33. In the event of a dispute relating to the interpretation of the Policy, the Head of Workforce and Organisational Development or the Head of Legal and Monitoring Officer will make the final decision on interpretation.

REVIEW OF THE POLICY

34. A review of this policy will take place when appropriate. Any amendments will be consulted on with all the relevant parties. However, in the case of amendments relating to legislative requirements, the procedure will be amended and reissued.

OCTOBER 2014

APPENDIX 1

PRESCRIBED PERSONS UNDER THE PUBLIC INTEREST DISCLOSURE ACT

Persons and descriptions of people	Matters Relating To
Accounts Commission for Scotland and auditors appointed by the Commission to audit the accounts of local government bodies.	Proper conduct of public business, value for money, fraud and corruption in local government bodies.
The Audit Commission for Local Authorities and the National Health Service in England.	Proper conduct of public business, value for money, fraud and corruption in public bodies.
Audit Scotland.	Proper conduct of public business, value for money, fraud and corruption in public bodies.
Auditor General for Wales.	Proper conduct of public business, value for money, fraud and corruption in relation to the provision of public services.
Auditor General for Scotland and persons appointed by or on his behalf under the Public Finance and Accountability (Scotland) Act 2000 ^[4] to act as auditors or examiners for the purposes of sections 21 to 24 of that Act.	Proper conduct of public business, value for money, fraud and corruption in relation to the provision of public services.
Auditors appointed by the Audit Commission for Local Authorities and the National Health Service in England to audit the accounts of (a) local government bodies as defined by section 53 of that Act (including police and crime commissioners, the Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime and the Common Council of the City of London, and the Chief Constables for Policy Forces maintained under Section 2 of the Police Act 1996, the Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis and the Commissioner of Police for the City of London Police) (b) health service bodies as defined by section 53 of that Act or (c) any other body whose accounts are subject to audit in accordance with the Audit Commission Act 1997	Proper conduct of public business, value for money, fraud and corruption in public bodies.
Auditors appointed by NHS Foundation trusts to audit the accounts of those trusts.	Proper conduct of public business, value for money, fraud and corruption in public bodies.
The Bank Of England	(a) The functioning of clearing houses (including central – counterparties); inter-bank payment systems and securities settlement systems. (b) The treatment, holding and issuing of banknotes by the authorised banks (and their agents) under Part 6 of the Banking Act 2009.
Care Council for Wales.	The registration of social care workers under the Care Standards Act 2000.
Care Inspectorate	The provision of care services, as defined in the Public Services Reform (Scotland) Act 2010.

Persons and descriptions of people	Matters Relating To
Care Quality Commission	(a) The registration and provision of a regulated activity as defined in section 8 of the Health and Social Care Act 2008 and the carrying out of any reviews and investigations under Part 1 of that Act or (b) any activities not covered by (a) in relation to which the Care Quality Commission exercises its functions.
Certification Officer.	Fraud, and other irregularities, relating to the financial affairs of trade unions and employers' associations.
Charity Commission for England and Wales.	Proper administration of charities and of funds given or held for charitable purposes.
Chief Executive of the Criminal Cases Review Commission.	Actual or potential miscarriages of justice.
Chief Executive of the Scottish Criminal Cases Review Commission.	Actual or potential miscarriages of justice.
Children's Commissioner	The rights, welfare and interests of children.
Children's Commissioner for Wales.	Matters relating to the rights, welfare and interests of children.
Commissioner for Children and Young People in Scotland	Promoting and safeguarding the rights of children and young people.
Commissioners of HM Revenue and Customs	The functions of the Commissioners for Revenue and Customs as set out in the Commissioners for Revenue and Customs Act 2005, including:- (a) the administration of the UK's taxes, including income tax, inheritance tax, corporation tax, capital gains tax, VAT and the excise duties. (b) the administration of the national insurance and tax credits systems (c) customs and border-related functions and (d) criminal investigations
Competition and Markets Authority	(a) The sale of goods or the supply of services, which adversely affect the interests of consumers. (b) Competition affecting markets in the UK.
Comptroller and Auditor General	Proper conduct of public business, value for money, fraud and corruption in relation to the provision of public services.
Director of the Serious Fraud Office.	(a) serious or complex fraud within the meaning of section 1 (3) of the Criminal Justice Act 1987 or (b) civil recovery of the proceeds of unlawful conduct, civil recovery investigations and disclosure orders in relation to confiscation investigations as set out in Part 5 or 8 or the Proceeds of Crime Act 2002.
Elected local policing bodies	Any report made in accordance with section 114 of the Local Government Finance Act 1988 in relation to:- (a) the Chief Constable for the elected local policing body's area or (b) the Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis, where the elected local policing body is the Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime.
Environment Agency	Acts or omissions which have an actual or potential effect on the environment or the management or regulation of the environment, including those relating to pollution, abstraction of water, flooding, the flow of rivers, inland fisheries and migratory salmon or trout.

Persons and descriptions of people	Matters Relating To
Financial Conduct Authority	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) the carrying on of investment business or of insurance business or of any business related to or constituting a regulated activity as defined in section 22 of the Financial Services and Markets Act 2000 and wholesale money market regimes (b) the conduct of persons authorised for the purposes of section 31 of the Financial Services and Markets Act 2000 including banks, building societies established under the Building Societies Act 1986, consumer credit firms and credit unions within the meaning of the Credit Unions Act 1979 or registered under the Credit Unions (Northern Ireland) Order 1985 or the Industrial and Provident Societies Act (Northern Ireland) 1969, friendly societies within the meaning of the Friendly Societies Act 1974 and the Friendly Societies Act 1992, insurers, the Society of Lloyd's managing agents (c) the conduct of persons who are subject to Part 18 of the Financial Services and Markets Act 2000 (d) the conduct of persons who are electronic money issuers for the purposes of electronic money regulations 2011 (e) the conduct of persons who are payment service providers for the purposes of the payment services regulations 2009 (f) the operation of small UK Alternative Investment Fund Managers registered under regulation 10 of the Alternative Investment Fund Managers Regulations 2013 (g) the operation of societies registered under the Friendly Societies Act 1974 and the Friendly Societies Act 1992, including friendly societies, benevolent societies, working men's clubs, specially authorised societies (h) the operation of 'registered societies' within the meaning of the Co-operative and Community Benefit Societies Act 2014 (i) the conduct of persons subject to rules made under Part 6 of the Financial Services and Markets Act 2000 (j) competition in relation to the provision of financial services and the financial services markets (k) the functioning of financial markets and (l) money laundering, financial crime and other serious financial misconduct, in connection with activities regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority.

Persons and descriptions of people	Matters Relating To
The Financial Reporting Council Limited and its conduct committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) the independent oversight of the regulation of the accountancy, auditing and actuarial professions (b) the independent supervision of Auditors General (as defined in section 1226 of the Companies Act 2006) (c) the monitoring of statutory audit functions in respect of major audits (as defined by paragraph 13 (10) of Schedule 10 to that Act), of third country audit functions (as defined in that paragraph), and of major local audits (as defined in that paragraph as applied by paragraph 28 of Schedule 5 to the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014) (d) the registration and monitoring of third country auditors (as defined in section 1261 of the Companies Act 2006) (e) compliance with the requirements of legislation relating to accounting and reporting and (f) the investigation of the conduct of auditors, accountants and actuaries and the holding of disciplinary hearings in public interest cases (as defined in paragraph 24 of Schedule 10 to that Act and by that paragraph as applied by paragraph 28 of Schedule 5 to the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014).
Food Standards Agency.	The health of any member of the public in relation to the consumption of food and other matters which concern the protection of the interests of consumers in relation to food.
Gas and Electricity Markets Authority	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) the generation, transmission, distribution and supply of electricity, participation in the operation of an electricity interconnector (as defined in section 4(3E) of the Electricity Act 1989) (b) providing a smart meter communication service (as defined in section 4 (3G) of that Act) and activities ancillary to these matters (c) the transportation, shipping and supply of gas through pipes, participation in the operation of a gas interconnector (as defined in section 5(8) of the Gas Act 1986. (d) providing a smart meter communication service (as defined in section 5 (11) of that Act) and activities ancillary to these matters and (e) the renewable generation of heat (as defined in section 100(3) of the Energy Act 2008) and activities ancillary to that matter.
General Chiropractic Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) the registration and fitness to practise of a member of a profession regulated by the Council and (b) any activities not covered by (a) in relation to which the Council has functions.
General Dental Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) the registration and fitness to practise of a member of a profession regulated by the Council and (b) any activities not covered by (a) in relation to which the Council has functions.
General Medical Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) the registration and fitness to practise of a member of a profession regulated by the Council and (b) any activities not covered by (a) in relation to which the Council has functions.

Persons and descriptions of people	Matters Relating To
General Optical Council	(a) the registration and fitness to practise of a member of a profession regulated by the Council and (b) any activities not covered by (a) in relation to which the Council has functions.
General Osteopathic Council	(a) the registration and fitness to practise of a member of a profession regulated by the Council and (b) any activities not covered by (a) in relation to which the Council has functions.
General Pharmaceutical Council	(a) the registration and fitness to practise of a member of a profession regulated by the Council and (b) any activities not covered by (a) in relation to which the Council has functions.
Health and Care Professions Council	(a) the registration and fitness to practise of a member of a profession regulated by the Council and (b) any activities not covered by (a) in relation to which the Council has functions.
Health and Safety Executive.	The health or safety of any individual at work other than individuals at work wholly or mainly on premises which are, or are on (a) a GB nuclear site (within the meaning given in section 68 of the Energy Act 2013) (b) an authorised defence site (within the meaning given in regulation 2 (1) of the Health and Safety (Enforcing Authority) Regulations 1998) or (c) a new nuclear build site (within the meaning given in regulation 2A of those Regulations)
Healthcare Improvement Scotland	(a) furthering the improvement in the quality of health care (within the meaning of section 10A of the National Health Service (Scotland) Act 1978) and (b) any activities not covered by (a) in relation to which Healthcare Improvement Scotland has functions.
Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills (the Chief Inspector)	(a) the regulation and inspection of establishments and agencies under Part 2 of the Care Standards Act 2000 (b) the inspection of the functions of local authorities in England referred to in section 135 (c) to (e) of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 (c) the inspection of Children's Services under section 20 of the Children's Act 2004 (d) the review of Local Safeguarding Children Boards under section 15A of the Children Act 2004 (e) the inspection, under section 87 of the Children Act 1989, of the welfare of children provided with accommodation by boarding schools and further education colleges (f) the inspection of the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service under section 143 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 and any other functions which may be assigned to the Chief Inspector under section 118 (4) of that Act but only in so far as they relate to one of the functions set out in (a) to (f) above.
Homes and Communities Agency	The regulation of registered providers of social housing, in accordance with Part 2 of the Housing and Regeneration Act 2008 (as amended by the Localism Act 2011), delivered through the Regulation Committee of the Homes and Communities Agency.

Persons and descriptions of people	Matters Relating To
Independent Police Complaints Commission	The conduct of a person serving with the police (as defined in section 12 (7) of the Police Reform Act 2002) or any other person in relation to whose conduct the Independent Police Complaints Commission exercises functions in or under any legislation.
Information Commissioner.	Compliance with the requirements of legislation relating to data protection and to freedom of information.
Local authorities which are responsible for the enforcement of food standards in accordance with sections 5 and 6 of the Food Safety Act 1990.	Compliance with the requirements of food safety legislation.
Local authorities which are responsible for the enforcement of health and safety legislation.	Health or safety of any individual at work; matters, which may affect the health and safety of any member of the public, arising out of or in connection with the activities of persons at work.
Local weights and measures authorities as defined by section 69 of the Weights and Measures Act 1985 which are responsible for the enforcement of consumer protection legislation.	Compliance with the requirements of consumer protection legislation.
Lord Advocate, Scotland.	Serious or complex fraud within the meaning of section 27 of the Criminal Law (Consolidation) (Scotland) Act 1995..
A member of the House of Commons	Any matter specified in this column.
Monitor	(a) the regulation and performance of NHS foundation trusts and (b) any activities not covered by (a) in relation to which Monitor exercises its functions.
National Crime Agency	Corrupt individuals or companies offering or receiving bribes to secure a benefit for themselves or others.
National Health Service Trust Development Authority	The performance of English NHS Trusts, including clinical quality, governance and management of risk.
The National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC) and any of its Officers	Child welfare and protection.
Nursing and Midwifery Council	(a) the registration and fitness to practise of a member of a profession regulated by the Council and (b) any activities not covered by (a) in relation to which the Council has functions.
Officer for Nuclear Regulation	The health and safety of any individual at work wholly or mainly on premises which are, or are on (a) a GB nuclear site (within the meaning given in section 68 of the Energy Act 2013) (b) an authorised defence site (within the meaning given in regulation 2 (1) of the Health and Safety (Enforcing Authority) Regulations 1998 or (c) a new nuclear build site (within the meaning given in regulation 2A of those regulations)
Office of Communications	(a) the provision of electronic communications networks and services and the use of the electro-magnetic spectrum (b) broadcasting and the provision of television and radio services (c) media ownership and control and (d) competition in communications markets.

Persons and descriptions of people	Matters Relating To
Office of Qualifications and Examinations Regulation	Issues relating to the Office of Qualifications and Examinations Regulation exercises functions under the Apprenticeships, Skills, Children and Learning Act 2009.
Office of Rail Regulation	(a) the provision and supply of railway services and (b) any activities not covered by (a) in relation to which the Office of Rail Regulation has functions.
Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator	The proper administration of charities and of funds given or held for charitable purposes.
Payment Systems Regulator	Payment systems (within the meaning given by section 41 of the Financial Services (Banking Reform) Act 2013) and the services provided by them.
Pensions Regulator	Occupational pension schemes and other private pension arrangements including matters relating to the Pensions Regulator's objective of maximising compliance with the duties under Chapter 1 of Part 1 (and the safeguards in sections 50 and 54) of the Pensions Act 2008.
Police and Crime Panels	(a) any complaint about the conduct of a relevant office holder, within the meaning of section 31 of the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011 and (b) any report made in accordance with section 114 of the Local Government Finance Act 1988 or section 4 or 5 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 in relation to the elected local policing body for the Police and Crime Panel's area.
Prudential Regulation Authority	(a) the carrying on of deposit taking business or insurance business or investment business or any business related to or constituting a regulated activity as designated pursuant to section 22A of the Financial Services and Markets Act 2000 (b) the safety and soundness of persons authorised for the purposes of section 31 of the Financial Services and Markets Act 2000, including banks, insurers, the Society of Lloyd's incorporated by the Lloyd's Act 1871, Lloyds managing agents, building societies established under the Building Societies Act 1986, designated investment firms, societies registered under the Friendly Societies Act 1974 and the Friendly Societies Act 1992, including friendly societies, benevolent societies, working men's clubs and specially authorised societies, and credit unions within the meaning of the Credit Unions Act 1979 or registered under the Credit Unions (Northern Ireland) Order 1985 or under the Industrial and Provident Societies Act (Northern Ireland) 1969, in connection with matters regulated by the Prudential Regulation Authority.
Public Services Ombudsman for Wales	Breaches by a member or co-opted member of a relevant authority (as defined in section 49 (6) of the Local Government Act 2000) of that authority's code of conduct.
Scottish Environment Protection Agency	Acts or omissions which have an actual or potential effect on the environment or the management or regulation of the environment, including those relating to flood warning systems and pollution.

Persons and descriptions of people	Matters Relating To
Scottish Housing Regulator	Social Landlords' performance of housing activities The registration of Registered Social Landlords in accordance with Part 2 of the Housing (Scotland) Act 2010 and The financial wellbeing and standards of governance of Registered Social Landlords.
Scottish Information Commissioner	Compliance with the requirements of legislation relating to the freedom of information.
Scottish Social Services Council.	Registration of the social services workforce by the Scottish Social Services Council under the Regulation of Care (Scotland) Act 2001..
Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills.	(a) Fraud, and other misconduct, in relation to companies, (b) Consumer safety.
Secretary of State for Transport.	Compliance with the requirements of merchant shipping law, including maritime safety.
Standards Commission for Scotland and the Chief Investigating Officer.	Breaches by a councillor or a member of a devolved public body (as defined in section 28 of the Ethical Standards in Public Life etc. (Scotland) Act 2000[9]) of the code of conduct applicable to that councillor or member under that Act.
Water Services Regulation Authority	The supply of water and the provisions of the sewerage services.
Water Industry Commissioner for Scotland.	The supply of water and the provision of sewerage services.
Welsh Ministers	The provision of Part II services as defined in section 8 of the Care Standards Act 2000 and the Children Act 1989. The inspection and performance assessment of Welsh local authority social services as defined in section 148 of the Health and Social Care (Community Health and Standards Act 2003 The review of, and investigation into, the provision of health care by and for Welsh