

Confidentiality

All concerns will be treated in confidence and every effort will be made not to reveal your identity if you so wish. At the appropriate time, however, you may need to come forward as a witness.

This policy encourages you however to put your name to your concern whenever possible. Please note staff:

- ◆ Must disclose the information in good faith
- ◆ Must believe it to be substantially true
- ◆ Must not act maliciously or make false allegations
- ◆ Must not seek any personal gain

Untrue allegations

If you make an allegation in good faith, but it is not confirmed by the investigation, no action will be taken against you and the Council will seek to ensure that you suffer no personal reprisals. If, however, you make an allegation frivolously, maliciously or for personal gain, disciplinary action may be taken against you.

How to raise a concern

As a first step, you should normally raise concerns with your immediate manager, supervisor or head of service. This depends, however, on the seriousness and sensitivity of the issues involved. For example, if you believe that management is involved, you should approach one of the following:

The Chief Executive
Head of Corporate Services
Head of Resources
Corporate Director



Internal contacts in relation to this policy

Dorcas Bunton, Chief Executive – Tel: 01629 761126,
Email: dorcas.bunton@derbyshiredales.gov.uk

Sandra Lamb: Head of Corporate Services –
Tel: 01629 761281,
Email: sandra.lamb@derbyshiredales.gov.uk

Paul Wilson: Corporate Director – Tel: 01629 761324,
Email: paul.wilson@derbyshiredales.gov.uk

Karen Henriksen: Head of Resources – Tel: 01629 761284,
Email: karen.henriksen@derbyshiredales.gov.uk

How the matter can be taken further

If you are not satisfied with any action taken, and if you feel it is right to take the matter outside the Council, possible contact bodies, together with an indication of the areas for which they are responsible are listed in the Council's formal Confidential Reporting Policy.



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Derbyshire Dales District Council

Whistleblowing Policy

Summary



A full version of our Confidential Reporting Policy is available on SIDD

What is Whistleblowing?

Whistleblowing or 'Confidential Reporting' encourages and enables employees to raise serious concerns within the Council rather than overlooking a problem or 'blowing the whistle' outside. Employees are often the first to realise there may be something seriously wrong within the Council, but may be afraid to express their concerns because they feel that speaking up would be disloyal to their colleagues or to the Council.

Our commitment

The Council's Employee Code of Conduct makes it clear that it is committed to the highest possible standards of openness, integrity and accountability. Anyone who has serious concerns about any aspect of the Council's work is encouraged to voice those concerns.

Who does the policy apply to?

The policy applies to all employees, (including those designated as casual hours, temporary, agency, authorised volunteers or work experience), and those contractors working for the Council on Council Premises, for example, agency staff, builders and drivers. It also covers suppliers and those providing services under a contract with the Council in their own premises.

This policy has been discussed with the relevant trade unions and professional organisations and has their support.

For independent advice you can contact the independent charity Public Concern at Work. Their lawyers can give you free confidential advice at any stage on how to raise a concern about serious malpractice at work. Their Helpline is 020 7404 6609, open between 9.00am and 6.00pm.

Aims of the Policy

- It encourages you to feel confident in raising serious concerns and to question and act upon concerns about practice
- It provides you with the means to raise those concerns and receive feedback on any action taken
- It ensures that you receive a response to your concerns and that you are aware of how to pursue them if you are not satisfied
- It reassures you that you will be protected from possible reprisals or victimisation if you have a reasonable belief that you have made any disclosure in good faith

What Types of Concern are Covered?

There are existing procedures in place to enable you to lodge a complaint about your own employment within the Council, namely:

- Grievance Procedure
- Harassment and Aggression Policy
- Equal Opportunities and Diversity

This Policy is intended to cover major concerns that fall outside the scope of the procedures identified above.

These include concerns about possible:

- Conduct which is a criminal offence
- Miscarriage of justice
- Health and safety risks, including risks to the public as well as other employees

- Damage to the environment
- Unauthorised use of public funds
- Theft or abuse of Council property
- Possible fraud and corruption
- Harassment or bullying of service users or staff
- Discrimination as a result of reporting a concern under this policy
- Other unethical conduct
- Abuse of children and vulnerable adults
- Actions which are intended to conceal any of the above

Safeguards and Victimisation

The Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998 protects whistleblowers from any reprisals as long as they meet the rules set out in the Act:

- You must disclose the information in good faith
- You must believe it to be substantially true
- You must not act maliciously or make false allegations
- You must not seek any personal gain

If what you are saying is true, you should have nothing to fear because you will be doing your duty to your employer and those for whom you are providing a service.

The Council will not tolerate any harassment or victimisation (including any informal pressures) and will take appropriate action to protect you when you raise a concern in good faith.