



LEEK TOWN COUNCIL

WHISTLE BLOWING POLICY

Approved 21st May 2024

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Leek Town Council is committed to honesty, integrity and ensuring that staff maintain high standards in their conduct.
- 1.2 This policy covers all councillors (bound by their Code of Conduct), employees, officers, and any other person engaged by the Town Council, eg contractors. Everyone covered by this policy is required to report, as soon as possible, any deviation from the policy that they observe. 3. This policy does not form part of any employee's contract of employment and may be amended it at any time.

2 DEFINITION OF WHISTLEBLOWING:

- 2.1 A whistleblower can be anyone covered by this policy (see 1.2) who reports wrongdoing. This will usually be something at work, though not always. The wrongdoing disclosed must appear to be against the public interest, affecting the complainant, others bound by this policy, and other individual or-the general public.
- 2.2 Whistleblowers are protected by law – individuals should not be treated unfairly or lose your job because of 'blowing the whistle', providing that the complaint is not malicious. Concerns can be raised at any time about an incident that happened in the past, is happening now, or is expected to happen in the near future.

3 RAISING CONCERNS AND CONFIDENTIALITY

- 3.1 Individuals should raise concerns with their line manager if appropriate, else with the Chair of the Human Resource Committee. A meeting with the complainant should be arranged as soon as possible to discuss the concern.
- 3.2 If they wish, individual may be accompanied by a colleague or other representative to any meetings under this policy. The representative must respect the confidentiality of disclosure and of any subsequent investigation.
- 3.3 Concerns should be disclosed openly between the parties but should only be disclosed to outsiders where this is essential to the investigation and with permission of the complainant.
- 3.4 A complaint against the Chair of the Human Resource Committee should be raised with the Chair of General Purposes Committee. If the same person holds both posts, then the complaint should be raised with the Chair of the Council.

4 DISCLOSURE TO OUTSIDE PARTIES

- 4.1 The aim of this policy is to provide an internal mechanism for reporting, investigating and remedying any wrongdoing in the workplace. In most cases it should not be necessary to alert anyone externally.
- 4.2 The law recognises that in some circumstances it may be appropriate to report concerns to an external body, but it is the Council's opinion that individuals should seek advice before reporting a concern to anyone external.
- 4.3 The independent whistleblowing charity Protect operates a confidential helpline; their contact details are at the end of this policy.

5 SUPPORT FOR WHISTLEBLOWERS

- 5.1 Whistleblowers will be given support should when genuine concerns are raised under this policy, even if they turn out to be mistaken.
- 5.2 Whistleblowers must not suffer any detrimental treatment as a result of raising a genuine concern. If a complainant believes that they have not been supported or have been treated adversely they should appeal to the Chair of the Council.

- 5.3 Individuals should not engage in discussion of your concerns with the individual they are reporting. If it is concluded that a whistleblower has made false accusations, they may be subject to disciplinary action.

6 TREATMENT OF WHISTLEBLOWERS

All persons covered by this policy (A2) must not threaten or retaliate against whistleblowers in any way. Such conduct will be investigated and may be subject to disciplinary action.