

STANDARDS COMMITTEE		
Report Title	ANNUAL REVIEW OF WHISTLEBLOWING POLICY AND REFERRALS	
Key Decision		Item No. 3
Ward		
Contributors		
Class	Part 1	Date: 1 MARCH 2012

1 Summary

This report sets out the referrals made under the Council's Whistleblowing Policy since 8th March 2011 and the action taken in response.

2 Recommendation

To note the referral and the action taken.

3 Background

3.1 The Council issued a whistleblowing policy in 1998. It has been reviewed regularly since then, most recently in December 2011. A copy of the current policy appears at Appendix 1. It is not proposed to change the policy now. Its purpose is to provide a means by which complaints of malpractice or wrongdoing can be raised by those who feel that other avenues for raising such issues are inappropriate, whether because they fear repercussions or for some other reason. As members of the Committee will see, the policy confirms that as far as possible, those raising complaints will be treated confidentially should they so wish. Members will also note that complaints may be raised in relation to councillors, employees, contractors or suppliers.

3.2 The Head of Law, as the Council's Monitoring Officer, receives referrals under the procedure. She then either investigates personally or refers to another senior officer to investigate as appropriate, depending on the circumstances of the complaint.

4 Referrals

4.1 There have been no referrals under the policy since the last report considered by this Committee.

5 The Whistleblowing Policy

The Whistleblowing Policy is attached at Appendix 1. No amendment to the policy is proposed at this stage. Members of the Committee are asked to note that the policy was amended recently to reflect the changes necessary as a consequence of the implementation of the Bribery Act 2010 and also to reflect changes consequent on recent staff changes. The Whistleblowing Policy appears on the Council's website, is referred to in the Council's Guide for Contractors and all new employees are informed about it in their induction process. Another article in Lewisham Life and mangers Guide is proposed for this year in addition to the existing publicity measures to keep the profile of the policy high.

6 Legal & Financial Implications

There are no specific legal or financial implications arising from this report.