



## **BUNGAY TOWN COUNCIL**

### **'WHISTLE BLOWING' POLICY**

#### **OVERVIEW**

It is important for Employees and Town Councillors to be aware of the procedures in place should they wish to highlight a serious concern i.e. cases of 'bad practice' or issues that appears to be against the interests of the public, the Council or its employees.

This policy gives reassurance that they can, without the fear of consequences, raise serious concerns within the Council rather than overlooking the issue or reporting the problem to an outside body.

The policy aims to do the following:

- identify avenues to take should they wish to raise concerns;
- clarify that the person can take the matter further if dissatisfied with the Council's response;
- clarify that the person will not face reprisal for the action they have taken.

Bungay Town Council will not tolerate harassment, bullying or victimisation aimed at any person who has raised an issue in good faith. (If any person is currently undergoing disciplinary or redundancy procedures, these procedures will not be halted as a result of whistle blowing.)

#### **CONFIDENTIALITY**

- Every possible measure will be taken to protect the identity of the person who has raised the concern. However, the resulting investigation may require statements or further evidence and these documents could reveal the source of the information.
- Where any allegation is made anonymously, the Council will consider the credibility of the concerns, the nature of the issue and the likelihood of confirming the allegation from alternative sources prior to committing to an investigation.

#### **ALLEGATIONS THAT ARE UNTRUE**

- If an allegation is made in good faith, but the investigation proves this not to be the case, no action will be taken against the person unless it is proven that the allegation was malicious or vexatious.

#### **COUNCIL'S ACTION**

Issues will be dealt with according to the nature of the allegation/concern. Issues may be:

- investigated by the Town Clerk (unless they relate to the Town Clerk).
- referred to the Governance, Employment and Finance Committee.
- referred to the Police.
- referred to the External Auditor.
- dealt with as an independent enquiry.

At times, concerns may be resolved without the need for formal action. Resolution may be made through discussion or agreed action.

**TIMINGS**

Issues should be dealt with promptly and appropriate timings given. If appropriate, within 10 working days of the concern being notified, the matter will be referred to the Employment Sub-Committee who will give advice regarding the following:

- how the matter will be dealt with
- whether further investigations will take place and, if not, the reasons why
- how long the proceedings are expected to take.

APPROVED ..... DATE .....

Review Date February 2021