



Cheshire East Council – Whistleblowing Action Plan

In responding to the full desk top review undertaken by PCaW there are specific actions needed for improvement.

These actions form the basis of the Whistleblowing Action Plan as outlined below. The action plan will be owned by the Head of Strategic HR noting that specific objectives will be delivered by a number of officers.

	Objective	Action	Lead Officer/s	Status
1	To refresh the Council's Whistleblowing Policy in line with the findings of the PCaW review and in consideration of the Whistleblowing Commission's Code of Practice (CoP).	1.1 PCaW have identified a number of action points that need consideration. The policy will be refreshed using the best practice guidance and compliance toolkit provided by PCaW ensuring that all action points are addressed.	Michael Todd	Complete – decision taken to adopt the Model Policy provided by PCAW
		1.2 Draft refreshed policy to be taken to the Audit and Governance Committee for approval.	Michael Todd	Complete – agenda item for 15/03/2018
		1.3 Whistleblowing policy to be reviewed annually.	Michael Todd	Will be covered by annual report to Committee as per existing arrangements
2	To refresh and finalise the Council's draft Whistleblowing Procedures in line	2.1 PCaW have identified a number of action points that should be considered as part of any refresh exercise, including;	Michael Todd	As stated above, the Model PCAW policy has been adapted for Cheshire East Council. Therefore

	with the PCaW review and ensure that all line managers are aware and supported in the understanding and application of the procedures.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) CEC to provide reassurance that CEC take any concerns raised seriously, maintain confidentiality and protect the whistle-blower. b) Amend statement whereby it states “for an internal disclosure to have protection under PIDA, a whistle-blower needs to raise something they reasonable believe to be true”. c) Amend statement whereby it states “anonymous whistle-blowers are not protected under PIDA”. d) Provide assurance to staff through the communications that CEC will protect them and signpost them to the independent advice available from PCaW. e) Include details on what steps managers will take in handling concerns. 		amendments to existing policy are no longer required but will be taken into account whilst developing supporting information and training materials.
		2.2 Draft procedures to be taken the Audit and Governance Committee to support the approval of the Whistleblowing Policy, understanding of how line managers will respond to whistleblowing concerns.	Michael Todd	Procedures are currently under development to ensure that they provide the appropriate level of detail to managers and members who may receive a referral.

3	To recommunicate the Council's whistleblowing arrangements including the revised policy and procedures to officers.	3.1	PCaW have listed a number of suggestions when preparing any communications material including;	Michael Moore	Whistleblowing has previously been promoted to staff via Team Talk in November 2016 and again via Team Voice in September 2017. However, the suggestions from PCAW will be incorporated into future communications and the messages supporting the publication of the new policy once it has been approved and adopted.
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Strong messages around the key assurances; including a much stronger "zero tolerance" message that victimisation will not be tolerated. b) Incorporation of case studies and examples of positive outcomes of whistleblowing. c) Clear endorsement from senior leadership to show commitment to empowering staff to raise concerns. 		
		3.2	Develop a communications plan to support the implementation of a revised policy, supporting procedures, and training opportunities. Consideration to be given as to how to make the policy, procedure and any communication accessible to all staff (location, access to ICT and any other barriers).	Michael Moore	A detailed communication plan will be delivered once the policy has been approved.
		3.3	To further promote the PCaW dedicated CEC Freephone number and advice line.	Michael Moore	This was promoted in September 2017 via Team Voice and in direct communications to managers. It is included within the draft

				policy and consideration will be given as to how best it can be promoted further.
4	To develop a training plan identifying officers and key stakeholders that should participate in training.	<p>4.1 To refresh the Council's training materials to ensure consistency with the revised policy and procedures. To include the slide on PIDA.</p> <p>4.2 Identify key stakeholders and officers</p> <p>4.3 Schedule training sessions and communicate out across the organisation promoting attendance.</p> <p>4.4 To identify two CEC officers who will participate in the PCaW workshop.</p>	<p>Sara Barker/Workforce Development</p> <p>Workforce Development Workforce Development</p> <p>CLT</p>	<p>Work has commenced to develop a training plan to coincide with the launch of the new policy for key stakeholders and officers. This is taking place as part of the above exercise.</p> <p>The Head of Strategic HR and Principal Auditor will attend the PCaW workshop in May 2018.</p>

This plan is kept under regular review and as new and additional issues are identified, proactive options for the management of those issues is considered and action taken to ensure robust responses.

Last updated: March 2018