



Kingsteignton Town Council

WHISTLEBLOWING POLICY

Introduction

All of us at one time or another have concerns about what is happening at work. Usually these concerns are easily resolved. However, when they are about unlawful conduct, financial malpractice, fraud, corruption or serious failures of standards at work that put people or property at risk (this is not intended to be an exhaustive list), it can be difficult to know what to do.

You may be worried about raising such issues or may want to keep the concerns to yourself, perhaps feeling it's none of your business or that it's only a suspicion. You may feel that raising the matter would be disloyal to colleagues, managers or to the organisation. You may even feel that your job will be at risk if you do raise a concern. You may decide to say something but find that you have spoken to the wrong person or raised the issue in the wrong way and are not sure what to do next.

Kingsteignton Town Council has introduced this policy to enable you to raise your concerns about such malpractice at an early stage and in the right way. We would rather that you raised the matter when you have a genuine concern rather than wait for proof. Please don't raise your concerns outside the Council before you have voiced your concerns internally first since doing so may weaken the protection given to you under the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998. The Council would welcome the opportunity to inquire into your concerns first.

If something is troubling you which you think the Mayor should know about or look into, please use this procedure. It is better to tackle it early rather than let it get out of hand. If you have an employment grievance, then please use the Council's Grievance Procedure.

This Whistle Blowing Procedure is primarily for concerns where the interests of others or of the organisation itself are at risk.

The Council's Assurances to You

The Council is committed to this policy. If you raise a concern in good faith, you will not be at risk of losing your job or suffering any form of retribution as a result. Of course the Council does not extend this assurance to someone who maliciously raises a matter they know is untrue.

The Council will not tolerate the harassment or victimisation of anyone raising a genuine concern. However, the Council recognises that you may nonetheless want to raise a concern in confidence under this policy. If you ask us to protect your identity, your details will not be disclosed without your consent. If the situation arises where the matter cannot be resolved without revealing your identity (for instance because your evidence is needed in court), the person investigating the matter will discuss with you how to proceed.

The Council will consider, as far as is reasonably practicable, concerns raised anonymously. If you do not reveal who you are the person investigating the matter will be

unable to respond to you. It will also make the task of investigating the allegation more difficult. Because of this, this policy is not appropriate for concerns raised anonymously.

What the Council will do if you raise a concern

Once you have expressed your concern, the matter will be looked into to assess what action should be taken initially. This may involve an internal inquiry or a more formal investigation. In the interim, the issue you raise will be acknowledged within 5 working days. You will be told:

- Who is handling the matter
- How you can contact him/her
- Whether your further assistance may be needed
- When you raise your concerns, you may be asked how you think the matter might best be resolved. If you do not have any personal interest concern falls more properly within the Grievance Procedure or the Anti-Fraud, Theft and Corruption Policy.

The person handling the matter will then write to you within 10 working days summarising your concerns and setting out what is likely to happen next.

Once the investigation is completed, you will be advised of the outcome in writing. Please note that it may not be possible to tell you the precise action taken where this would infringe a duty of confidence owed to someone else.

How to raise your concerns:

(1) If you have a concern about malpractice, please raise it with the Proper Officer or any Councillor. This may be done orally or in writing.

(2) If for whatever reason, you feel unable to raise the matter with your manager, please raise your concerns with one of the following:

- Town Clerk
- Mayor
- Committee Chairman
- H R Committee
- TDC – Code of Conduct



Kingsteignton Town Council



Kingsteignton Town Council