

Hollinswood and Randlay Parish Council

# **WHISTLEBLOWING POLICY**

Adopted May 2023

7 Downemead, Hollinswood, TF3 2EW

To be monitored and reviewed annually.

Please see the report at the end of document.

---

## Hollinswood and Randlay Parish Council

*Chairman: Cllr Mrs Sheenagh Unwin*

*Clerk: Katrina Baker MBE MILCM*

---

### WHISTLEBLOWING POLICY

#### The Policy

This policy has been created by Hollinswood & Randlay Parish Council (we, our, us). It sets out our procedures for the handling of whistleblowing in the workplace.

The policy applies to all employees.

The policy does not form part of your contract of employment.

We may amend the policy from time to time.

#### Whistleblowing

Whistleblowing is the formal term used to describe a situation where a worker discloses information about wrongdoing in the workplace.

In legal terms, whistleblowing is called a protected disclosure.

A disclosure qualifies for protection under whistleblowing laws if the worker who make the disclosure reasonably believes that:

- a) Making the disclosure is in the public interest (and not a personal grievance) and
- b) Making the disclosure tends to show that past, present or any likely future wrongdoing which falls into one or more of any of the following categories:
  - Criminal offences
  - Failure to comply with a legal obligation
  - Miscarriage of justice
  - Endangering a person's health or safety
  - Damage to the environment
  - Covering up or concealing any wrongdoing which falls into the above categories.

A protected disclosure or blowing the whistle is different to the circumstances where you raise a grievance. If you wish to raise a personal grievance you should raise this in accordance with the grievance policy which can be located in the Clerk's Office.

We will provide regular training to staff at all levels about whistleblowing. You can find more information about what may be classed as a protected disclosure via the information sources listed at the bottom of the policy.

#### Whistleblowing Protection

You have legal rights and protections if you have made a protected disclosure. If you make a protected disclosure, you should NOT as a result of it:

- be dismissed
- be selected for redundancy
- be victimised or subjected to any detriment in the workplace

---

## Hollinswood and Randlay Parish Council

*Chairman: Cllr Mrs Sheenagh Unwin*

*Clerk: Katrina Baker MBE MILCM*

---

It is important for you to be aware that it is not possible for your right to make a protected disclosure to be restricted through any non-disclosure agreement or contractual provision.

You have the right to bring a claim in the Employment Tribunal if you believe that your rights have been violated.

We would also like to let you know that we will support you if you make a protected disclosure, even if your disclosure is mistaken or does not result in further action.

If you believe that you have been subjected to any treatment in violation of your above rights, then you can speak with the person dealing with your disclosure. If you remain concerned about this you can raise a grievance by following the usual grievance procedure. You may also wish to seek advice about this from an external source.

### **Making a Protected Disclosure**

#### Reporting to us

If you need to report a concern about any matter covered by this policy, you should ordinarily raise this with the Clerk to the Council.

If you feel that it is not appropriate to speak to the Clerk, you should raise the issue with the Chairman.

You can report your concerns to us in the manner in which you feel most comfortable in the circumstances. It is helpful to have a written account of your concern, but you may wish to speak in person before doing so. You can arrange a private meeting to discuss the disclosure before or after submitting a written account.

It is useful for you to include the following key information in any disclosure to us:

- any relevant dates
- details of your concern, including the factual background
- why you are concerned
- details of any individuals who were witnesses to any key incidents
- any evidence you may have available

We can investigate a disclosure even if you do not have any evidence other than your own account of the concerns.

We understand that there may be occasions when you wish to make an anonymous report to us. It is usually more difficult for us to investigate anonymously, but we will aim to investigate any report to the best of our ability.

---

## Hollinswood and Randlay Parish Council

*Chairman: Cllr Mrs Sheenagh Unwin*

*Clerk: Katrina Baker MBE MILCM*

---

### Reporting externally

There may be circumstances where you do not feel it is appropriate to raise a concern with us directly and feel it is necessary to report or share your concerns externally. This may include reporting the concern to an MP, legal advisor or a prescribed body. A prescribed body is a body which has been officially designated to receive certain protected disclosures.

You must ensure that you have made your disclosure to the correct prescribed body. The full list of appropriate external bodies is available on the government website and this should be consulted in the case where you feel it is necessary to raise your concern externally.

### **How we deal with a Disclosure**

We are committed to ensuring that any disclosure covered by this policy is dealt with fairly and consistently.

### Inquiries and investigations

Once you have shared a disclosure with us, we will look into your concern. We may need to conduct a formal investigation. The timeframe for this process will vary depending on the nature of your concern. As a rough guide, we would expect that we would deal with our disclosure within one week. Complicated cases may take longer but will keep you informed.

We will keep you updated with feedback which will usually cover the progress of our investigation and once concluded a summary of our findings. We will usually inform you of any disciplinary action which will be taken in the case of finding malpractice.

### Confidentiality and record keeping

We will keep a record of all protected disclosures. This record will include the number and nature of what we receive. It will also include a record of the outcome of our investigations and the feedback we provide. All records will be kept in accordance with the data protection policy in the Clerk's Office.

We may, from time to time, conduct surveys to see where we can improve the policy or procedure.

We will deal with your disclosure in confidence. We will take all reasonable steps to keep your identity confidential. We will always ask your permission and will support you through the process. We recognize that we may receive anonymous reports. We will make appropriate inquiries and will take action as far as is possible.

---

## Hollinswood and Randlay Parish Council

*Chairman: Cllr Mrs Sheenagh Unwin*

*Clerk: Katrina Baker MBE MILCM*

---

### Disciplinary action

If any internal investigation or inquiry following your disclosure results in a finding of malpractice we will deal with this in accordance with our usual disciplinary procedure.

A copy is available in the Clerk's Office.

Depending on the nature and severity of any findings, this may be referred to a third party / regulatory body.

Disclosures should never be made maliciously. Victimisation of a staff member, as a result of a disclosure, will not be tolerated and the person responsible may need to be dealt with via a disciplinary procedure.

### **Sources of independent advice**

You can seek advice about making a protected disclosure from

- an independent legal advisor
- The Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service (ACAS)
- The whistleblowing charity 'Protect'
- Any trade union or works council of which you are member.

### Prescribed Bodies

The Monitoring Officer  
Telford & Wrekin Council  
Darby House  
TELFORD  
Shropshire

### **Monitoring and Review**

This policy was adopted in May 2023

Next review

May 2024