

Agenda Item	10
Report No	AS/11/23

THE HIGHLAND COUNCIL

Committee: Audit & Scrutiny Committee

Date: 15th June 2023

Report Title: Whistleblowing Annual Report 2022/23

Report By: Strategic Lead (Corporate Audit & Performance)

1. Purpose/Executive Summary

- 1.1 This annual report provides details of the number of whistleblowing concerns received and their outcomes, including whether the concerns have been upheld, for the year 2022/23.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 The Committee is invited to:
- (i) scrutinise the information at section 4.1 including the low number of whistleblowing concerns received;
 - (ii) note that where a whistleblowing investigation identifies any control weakness, fraudulent activity or areas for improvement this will be addressed through an Internal Audit report which will be provided to Committee to scrutinise. There was 1 such report during the year;
 - (iii) note that this report together with the Whistleblowing policy will be provided to the next meeting of the HR Sub Group on 21/06/23 to consider whether any changes are required to the policy.

3. Implications

- 3.1 There are no Resource, Risk, Legal, Community (Equality, Poverty, Rural and Island), Climate Change / Carbon Clever or Gaelic implications arising from this report.

4. Annual Report 2022/23

- 4.1 During the year 2022/23, there were 2 concerns reported through whistleblowing. Neither of these fell within the categories of malpractice/ wrongdoing set out in section 1.1 of the [Whistleblowing policy](#). Both concerns related to HR matters and are outside the scope of

whistleblowing. As 1 concern was anonymous, no further action was taken but the other employee was notified accordingly.

For comparison purposes, 6 concerns were reported in 2021/22. 4 of these were subsequently investigated as whistleblowing. Further information is provided in the [2021/22 Annual Report](#) provided to Committee on 30/11/22.

- 4.2 1 whistleblowing investigation carried over from 2021/22 was completed in 2022/23 and a confidential report was provided for scrutiny by the Committee on 23/03/23. In this case the whistleblowing concerns were not upheld but some areas for improvement were identified. The management agreed actions in response to these will be followed up as part of the normal action tracking process.

Designation: Strategic Lead (Corporate Audit & Performance)

Date: 1st June 2023

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