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Organisation:

East Cambridgeshire District Council

Date:

22/08/24

Report on your whistleblowing arrangements

Submitted by:

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About your Whistleblowing Scanner report

This report incorporates landmark regulatory requirements, current industry best practice and Protect's expertise on effective whistleblowing arrangements.

The report scores are divided into three key areas:

1. Governance

Ensuring the structure and oversight of whistleblowing arrangements meets best practice

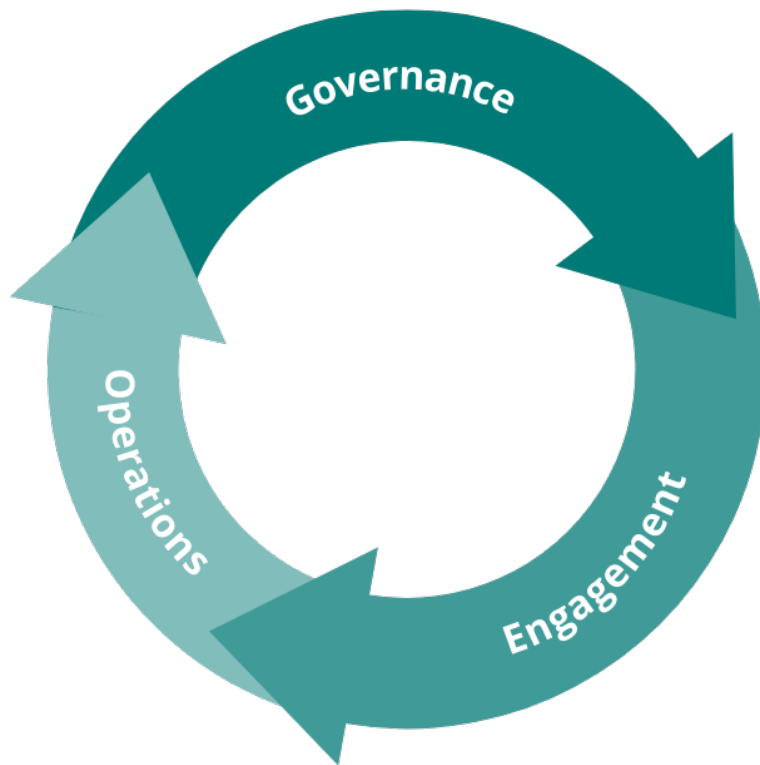
2. Engagement

How you engage with staff to encourage them to whistleblow, and with your managers to help them handle concerns

3. Operations

How whistleblowing works in practice in your organisation; from how staff are supported on

the ground, to providing feedback, and how you record and investigate concerns



Your Whistleblowing Scanner score is:
81%

Breakdown of your score:

	Score
Governance	100%
Engagement	82%
Operations	62%

Recommendations

1. Governance

It's important that there is a leader (eg 'Champion) that is a figurehead for speaking up, and who can drive forward the culture where staff feel comfortable in raising concerns internally with you, their employer. It's also vital to have a well written, easily understandable Whistleblowing Policy.

Congratulations, this is a good score for Governance. To continue to improve:

- If not already doing so, consider incorporating an overview of management information on whistleblowing in published data eg your website or annual reports.
- Make sure whistleblowing is discussed regularly at senior level. Are your arrangements effective?
- Conducting regular reviews of your whistleblowing arrangements - for example via this Whistleblowing Scanner tool - will help you identify strengths and weaknesses and help give you a workplan moving forwards.

2. Engagement

Communicating and engaging with staff and managers on your whistleblowing arrangements is essential to building a culture where staff feel confident raising their concerns and managers feel confident in handling concerns effectively.

Congratulations, this is a good score for Engagement. To continue to improve:

- Make sure all staff groups, including those typically marginalised or vulnerable, are consulted

and included

- Regular communications is vital, and consider the staff member's employment life cycle, from induction to exit interview
- Communicating information to external stakeholders will help demonstrate you're an accountable and transparent organisation
- Don't forget to focus on feedback

Protect can help you through our Membership support, which provides a Best Practice Guide including sample survey questions, and we also have a range of regular and bespoke training options.

3. Operations

It's vital that your arrangement work in practice: it's no good having a well written policy if processes aren't followed, managers are not trained to receive concerns appropriately and investigations are ineffective. Providing feedback to the whistleblower is an essential stage of the whistleblowing process. Doing these well will lead to better trust and confidence in the arrangements overall.

Well done, this is a good score for Operations but there is room for improvement. Check where your gaps were to help focus future work.

- Think about how you review cases to ensure that any breaches of confidentiality or complaints of victimisation have been appropriately acted upon.
- Try to obtain feedback in a systematic way from whistleblower's who have used your arrangements, to ensure they feel supported through the process of raising concerns.
- We recommend that you periodically review management information to ensure consistency of processes in recording concerns.
- Ensure that investigation guidance is clear and that an independent internal function conducts periodic reviews of your investigations, to ensure that the principles have been followed.

Next steps

We hope that this Whistleblowing Scanner report proves valuable in your efforts to strengthen the whistleblowing culture in your organisation.

Protect is a leading authority on whistleblowing in the UK. Since 1993, we have been supporting organisations like yours in a number of ways:

- providing support developing whistleblowing policies and procedures
- helping to establish whistleblowing arrangements from scratch
- providing comprehensive training on receiving and handling whistleblowing concerns, investigations and victimisation
- providing expertise through our Membership packages, with nearly 300 organisations currently benefiting from one of the three Membership packages
- offering bespoke support and consultancy

For more information, please visit our website or get in touch with us via **business@protect-advice.org.uk** or by calling us on **(+44) (0)20 3117 2520**.

Protect Team

www.protect-advice.org.uk