

Report Paragraph Number	Area	Findings	Monitoring Officer Response	Future Actions
3.16	Organisational Culture - Whistle-blowing and Reporting Concerns	In the course of engaging with complainants and considering allegations, the Clear Up Team noted from multiple sources that, whilst there have been improvements, there is still some distrust in the Council's current arrangements for whistle-blowing and reporting concerns. This includes distrust in the Council's processes for how concerns are assessed, investigated and acted upon, and also in the Council's commitment to fully protect the identity of whistle-blowers should they request to remain anonymous for fear of reprisal	(1) The Council's intention is to improve organisational culture. On the one hand, the Council wishes to support staff who wish to raise concerns but on the other hand there needs to be explicit support for whistleblowing from senior managers. The new Whistleblowing Policy is part of a drive to create an environment where staff are able to raise concerns within the Council. It is accepted that this cultural change in perception will not happen overnight and that trust will have to be re-earned	(1) The Monitoring Officer will continue to oversee Whistleblowing and will take appropriate steps where necessary
3.18	Organisational Culture - Whistle-blowing and Reporting Concerns	The Clear Up Team is encouraged that the Council has already acted on the need to further improve the current arrangements, evidenced by the appointment of Grant Thornton UK LLP in early 2017 to undertake a review of the Council's current whistle-blowing arrangements. Grant Thornton's scope includes comparison of the current processes with best practice examples and guidance, making recommendations for any changes required and developing a plan for implementing these changes	(2) During the Grant Thornton review, pro-active changes have been made to the Whistleblowing process that can be immediately implemented (e.g. additional information when recording information)	(1) Once Grant Thornton report their findings and recommendations, these will be considered and actioned by the Monitoring Officer
3.20	Approach to Investigations	Underlying a significant proportion of the 66 allegations is the Council's approach to conducting investigations. This includes the approach to corporate fraud investigations, investigations of organisations in receipt of Council funds, management investigations, HR/disciplinary investigations and also the recommendation of external investigators to schools	<p>The Council undertakes investigations for a number of different purposes and there is a need to separate those that are undertaken as part of the Council's enforcement functions which are undertaken by trained investigators (e.g. Trading Standards officers investigating an allegations in respect of the sale of counterfeit goods) with those other types of investigations that are undertaken (e.g. a disciplinary investigation).</p> <p>The 'criminal' investigations are conducted in accordance with the Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984 and the Criminal Procedure and Investigations Act 1996 and under the umbrella of the Council's Enforcement Policy.</p> <p>There should, however, be a corporate methodology in respect of 'other' investigations and this can be achieved by the introduction of a Corporate Investigations Procedure covering areas such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Training and guidance</li> <li>- Standards</li> <li>- Commissioning external investigators</li> <li>- Setting robust and realistic timetables</li> </ul>	The preparation of such a Procedure has been referred to the Divisional Director, HR and Transformation for consideration and to action with the assistance of the Monitoring Officer
3.24	Election Procedures	The Clear Up Team received a number of allegations relating to past elections, and primarily the May 2014 elections. In the course of its work to review these allegations, the Clear Up Team found that, following the well-documented problems that have occurred in the past, the Council has significantly improved its election procedures. There is, however, the opportunity for further improvement and the Clear Up Team has therefore made recommendations to further strengthen election procedures and provide additional reassurance ahead of future elections. This includes work to explain these improvements to voters to help build trust ahead of the 2018 election	These matters have been addressed in more detail in Annex A of the Clear-Up Board Report and recommendations for further action [see CU 039, CU 040 and CU 047]	See entries for CU 037, CU 040 and CU 047 for steps being taken to address recommendations for further actions

3.25	<b>Monitoring Compliance following Council decision points</b>	The Clear Up Team considered a number of allegations that highlighted failings of the Council to appropriately monitor actions / implementation after a decision has been taken. This includes (i) awarding property leases but then failing to monitor to ensure that the building is being used for the purposes original applied for; (ii) commissioned service providers not being monitored consistently and with sufficient frequency to ensure standards and value for money; (iii) grant conditions; and (iv) as highlighted above, implementation of actions from Council investigations or audits. The Council may wish to reflect on this learning and consider what improvements can be made to monitoring	The issuing of monitoring crosses Directorates but there should be a corporate methodology in respect of monitoring and this can be achieved by the introduction of a Monitoring Policy setting out corporate standards	The preparation of such a Procedure has been referred to the Divisional Director, Strategy, Policy, Equality and Partnerships for consideration and to action with the assistance of the Monitoring Officer
3.26	<b>HR Policies and Practices</b>	The Council's past HR policies and practices, and the problems arising from them, was a theme across several allegations. Specific examples were provided as Clear Up allegations alongside more general comments from complainants about weaknesses in this area	These matters have been addressed in more detail in Annex A of the Clear-Up Board Report and recommendations for further action [see CU 015, CU 017, CU 022, CU 024, CU 025, CU 026, CU 027, CU 031, CU 035, CU 057 and CU 066]	See entries for CU 015, CU 017, CU 022, CU 025, CU 027, CU 031, CU 035, CU 057 and CU 066 for steps being taken to address recommendations for further actions
3.29	<b>Council Systems and Processes</b>	Alongside HR policies and practices, the Clear Up Team also identified that there are opportunities to improve other Council-wide corporate systems and processes, and was encouraged that the Council's leadership has already started to act on this. This includes (i) improvements to the processes for DBS checks and referrals; (ii) the system for booking Councillor Ward surgeries; and (iii) the approval and completion of timesheets for part-time and zero hour contract staff	(1) The matter in (i) and (iii) have been addressed in more detail in Annex A of the Clear-Up Board Report and recommendations for further action [see CU 022, CU 024, CU 025 and CU 026]  (2) As to (ii) a new booking system has now been introduced following agreement by CMT	(1) See entries for CU 022, CU 024, CU 025 and CU 026 for steps being taken to address recommendations for further actions  (2) No further action
3.31	<b>Council Systems and Processes</b>	The Clear Up Team is encouraged by the Council's recent internal audit work to review officers' declarations of interest. In addition, given findings by the Clear Up Team during the course of the Clear Up Project concerning Members' declarations (referenced in <b>Annex A</b> ), the Clear Up Team has recommended to the Council that the scope of this work should be extended to also include Members' declarations of interests	(3) This matter has been addressed in more detail in Annex A of the Clear-Up Board Report and recommendations for further action [see CU 025]	(3) See entry for CU 025 for steps being taken to address recommendations for further actions
3.32	<b>Member / Officer Protocols</b>	The Clear Up Team received allegations, and also heard anecdotal evidence, relating to the earlier part of the Clear Up period which related to concerns that Members had inappropriately pressurised officers into bypassing Council procedures, covering a number of matters including Council grants, Council payments and recruitment	The Member/ Officer Protocol has been reviewed and a revised Member/ Officer Relations' Protocol has been prepared	Present the revised Member/ Officer Relations' Protocol to a future Constitutional Working Party for consideration

CLEAR-UP PROJECT  
MATTERS ARISING FROM OVERARCHING FINDINGS AND LESSONS LEARNED

<p>3.35</p>	<p><b>Security/ Confidentiality</b></p>	<p>During the course of the Clear Up Team’s work a number of security and confidentiality issues arose that the Council should consider and seek to address. Specifically these include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- A history of leaks of confidential Council conversations and documents, which appears to be an ongoing issue (although not from the Clear Up Project);</li> <li>- A weakness in the control of exempt information provided to Members (Pink Papers), particularly where it relates to ongoing litigation and litigation legal privilege applies; and</li> <li>- Inappropriate IT access - a specific case where the Clear Up Team requested access to several former officers’ email accounts and the Clear Up Team’s confidential rationale for requesting this was mistakenly copied by an IT officer on more than one occasion to another officer who should not have seen the request</li> </ul>	<p>(1) Regarding leaks of confidential information and a weakness in control of exempt information provided to Members, data protection is important and both the Member/ Officer Protocol and the Employees' Code of Conduct have been reviewed and a revised Member/ Officer Relations' Protocol and a revised Employees' Code of Conduct prepared. Both these documents address confidential and exempt information and the need to protect data</p> <p>(2) Inappropriate cc'ing of emails is unacceptable. The Council has an Email and Internet Policy and which addresses this.</p>	<p>(1) The revised Member/ Officer Relations' Protocol and Employees' Code of Conduct will be presented to a future Constitutional Working Party for consideration</p> <p>(2) The specific cases referred to in respect of inappropriate IT access has been referred to the Divisional Director IT for consideration and action</p>
-------------	---	--	---	---