

# WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE COUNCIL

## Report by Chief Executive

### Audit & Performance Review Committee : 11 May 2011

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**Subject: Activity on Whistleblowing Hotline to 31 March 2011**

#### **1. Purpose**

- 1.1** The purpose of this report is to advise Committee of the level of activity on the whistleblowing hotline.

#### **2. Background**

- 2.1** West Dunbartonshire Council (WDC) has had a Confidential Reporting Policy, or whistleblowing policy, since 2000.
- 2.2** A dedicated telephone hotline operated by Internal Audit to support the WDC Confidential Reporting Policy was launched on 6 March 2006 and was re-launched by way of a payslip message, global email and Intranet article on 29 July 2008.

#### **3. Main Issues**

- 3.1** Whistleblowing is taken to include contact with Internal Audit on specific cases through the use of the Council's whistleblowing telephone hotline, email, on-line form or traditional letter.
- 3.2** Since the launch of the whistleblowing hotline on 6 March 2006 there have been a total of 169 cases, covering a variety of subjects, as summarised below:

<u>Quarter</u>	<u>2006/07</u>	<u>2007/08</u>	<u>2008/09</u>	<u>2009/10</u>	<u>2010/11</u>
1	13	7	5	8	9
2	7	4	6	9	12
3	5	4	9	9	9
4	6	16	11	9	11
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	31	31	31	35	41
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- 3.3** These cases have been initially assessed by Internal Audit and then investigated or passed to departmental management for attention as appropriate. A summary of 11 cases for the 4th quarter of 2010/11 and details of the outcome are shown in Appendix A.

#### **4. People Implications**

- 4.1** This policy does have the potential to cause personnel issues, dependent on the circumstances or findings of any concern raised.

#### **5. Financial Implications**

- 5.1** There are no financial implications.

#### **6. Risk Analysis**

- 6.1** There are risks to the Council in financial, legal, operational and reputation terms of not operating a Whistleblowing service. In order to meet the Corporate objective of Improving Accountability to Stakeholders this Council takes all reports of wrongdoing seriously and seeks to investigate all complaints where possible.

#### **7. Equalities, Health & Human Rights Impact Assessment (EIA)**

- 7.1** No significant issues were identified in a screening for potential equality impact of this policy.

#### **8. Conclusions and Recommendations**

- 8.1** Although usage remains relatively low, the Whistleblowing re-launch ensures all employees remain aware of ways to report concerns of wrongdoing within the Council.
- 8.2** The Committee is asked to note this report.

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**David McMillan**  
**Chief Executive**  
**Date: 19 April 2011**

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**Appendix:** Summary of Activity on Whistleblowing Hotline from 1<sup>st</sup> January 2011 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2011

**Background Papers:** None

**Wards Affected:** All