

10 March 2020
Our ref: 6160188

Dear Mr Moore,

Regarding whistle blowers from external organisations, No there is not a standard policy, each delivery unit would appraise and action as necessary, depending on the circumstances of the issues raised.

For example should an issue be raised by a worker in a care home, our adult social care team would action the Care quality team to investigate. This is the same process in all delivery units, Family services, Street Scenes or Customer Finance. I hope this gives you additional information which will be of assistance.

Kind regards

Belinda Puaar

Thank you for your request received on 4 March 2020, for the following information:
I write seeking information about your LA's role as a prescribed body under the Public Interest Disclosure (Prescribed Persons) Order 1999.
External whistleblower is make a disclosure to LA about a matter in respect of which you are a prescribed body.

Q1 Does Barnet take action to protect external whistleblowers from unjustified treatment by their employers or others?

Please select one of the below answers if possible '

- i. Yes (please explain what action is taken)
- ii. No

Q2 Does any protection against unjustified treatment provided by your organisation extend to persons reporting on behalf of external whistleblowers?

- i. Yes (please explain what action is taken)
- ii. No

Q3 Does any protection extend to proposed or intended unjustified action against an external whistleblower contemplated by his/her employer or another in respect of the disclosure?

- i. Yes (please explain what action is taken)
- ii. No

Q4 Does Barnet offer any reward or bounty for information received from an external whistleblower in respect of information about which you are the prescribed body or person?

- i. Yes
- ii. No

Q5 Does your organisation publish for the public a step by step guide on how it follows up on external whistleblower information?

- i. Yes
- ii. No

Q6 Where your organisation does not feel itself to be legally competent to engage with a disclosure made by an external whistleblower, do you have a policy and process to refer that disclosure to another prescribed body/person/regulator or other agency better placed to deal with it?

- i. Yes (please provide a copy of the policy, where written)
- ii. No

Q7 Where in the circumstances described in Q6 above, your L A passes information to another prescribed body etc., do you have a policy and process to advise the external whistleblower that the disclosure has been passed to another body etc?

- i. Yes (please provide a copy of the policy, where written)
- ii. No

Q8 Where an external whistleblower may be dissatisfied with his/her dealings with your LA, is there an appeals policy and process which engage someone who is independent of the investigating department?

- i. Yes (please provide a copy of the policy, where written)
- ii. No
- iii. Not known

Q9 Does your LA publish FAQ to advise and assist external whistleblowers considering making a disclosure to you?

- i. Yes (please provide the FAQ or direct me to it)
- ii. No

Q10 Does all your staff which communicates with or otherwise manages external whistleblowers receive specialist and on-going training for that purpose?

- i. Yes
- ii. No

Q11 Where, following a disclosure to your LA by an external whistleblower about a matter for which you are prescribed, an alleged act of retaliation occurs against the external whistleblower by the employer or another person, does your organisation investigate the alleged act of retaliation?

- i. Yes
- ii. No
- iii. It would depend on the facts

Q12 Please describe what criteria you consider in deciding whether to investigate information received from an external whistleblower about a matter in respect of which you are prescribed?

Q13 Does your organisation distinguish between public complaints and external whistleblowers?

- i. Yes (please describe the essential differences in approach between managing public complaints and external whistleblower disclosures)
- ii. NO

Q14 Apart from any information on your website, does your organisation undertake any

We have processed this request under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

Response

The council holds the information requested and it is attached/ the answers to your questions are below

Q1 Does Barnet take action to protect external whistleblowers from unjustified treatment by their employers or others? Please select one of the below answers if possible '

i . Yes (please explain what action is taken)

ii. No

Yes. Barnet's Corporate Anti Fraud Team have a policy on Whistleblowing which all staff are expected to follow. Failure to do so would be likely to result in action under the Council's Disciplinary Policy.

Q2 Does any protection against unjustified treatment provided by your organisation extend to persons reporting on behalf of external whistleblowers? i. Yes (please explain what action is taken) ii. No

Yes

Q3 Does any protection extend to proposed or intended unjustified action against an external whistleblower contemplated by his/her employer or another in respect of the disclosure?

i. Yes (please explain what action is taken)

ii. No

This is not specified and would not be within our control. The policy is drafted in line with the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998.

Q4 Does Barnet offer any reward or bounty for information received from an external whistleblower in respect of information about which you are the prescribed body or person?

i. Yes

ii. No

No

Q5 Does your organisation publish for the public a step by step guide on how it follows up on external whistleblower information?

i. Yes

ii. No

No

Q6 Where your organisation does not feel itself to be legally competent to engage with a disclosure made by an external whistleblower, do you have a policy and process to refer that disclosure to another prescribed body/person/regulator or other agency better placed to deal with it?

i. Yes (please provide a copy of the policy, where written)

ii. No

No

Q7 Where in the circumstances described in Q6 above, your L A passes information to another prescribed body etc., do you have a policy and process to advise the external whistleblower that the disclosure has been passed to another body etc?

i. Yes (please provide a copy of the policy, where written)

ii. No

Not applicable

Q8 Where an external whistleblower may be dissatisfied with his/her dealings with your LA, is there an appeals policy and process which engage someone who is independent of the investigating department?

i. Yes (please provide a copy of the policy, where written)

ii. No

iii. Not known

Yes. Monitoring Officer, Chief Finance Officer, or the Chief Executive

Q9 Does your LA publish FAQ to advise and assist external whistleblowers considering making a disclosure to you?

i. Yes (please provide the FAQ or direct me to it)

ii. No

No

Q10 Does all your staff which communicates with or otherwise manages external whistleblowers receive specialist and on-going training for that purpose?

i. Yes

ii. No

No - Corporate L&D to date has not been commissioned to develop or provide staff which communicate with or otherwise manages external whistleblowers specialist and or ongoing training

Q11 Where, following a disclosure to your LA by an external whistleblower about a matter for which you are prescribed, an alleged act of retaliation occurs against the external whistleblower by the employer or another person, does your organisation investigate the alleged act of retaliation? i. Yes ii. No iii. It would depend on the facts

If the act is perpetrated by the employer then yes. If it is perpetrated by another person it would depend on the facts as to whether we would become involved.

Q12 Please describe what criteria you consider in deciding whether to investigate information received from an external whistleblower about a matter in respect of which you are prescribed?

Please see attached Whistleblowing policy for further information.

Q13 Does your organisation distinguish between public complaints and external whistleblowers?

i. Yes (please describe the essential differences in approach between managing public complaints and external whistleblower disclosures)

ii. NO

No

Q14. Apart from any information on your website, does your organisation undertake any public awareness programme(s) regarding whistleblowing?

i. Yes (if so please provide details)

ii. No

iii. Not known

NO

Further information

If you are interested in the data that the council holds you may wish to visit Open Barnet, the council's data portal. This brings together all our published datasets and other information of interest on one searchable database for anyone, anywhere to access. <http://open.barnet.gov.uk/>

Advice and Assistance : Direct Marketing

If you are a company that intends to use the names and contact details of council officers (or other officers) provided in this response for direct marketing, you need to be registered with the Information Commissioner to process personal data for this purpose. You must also check that the individual (whom you wish to contact for direct marketing purposes) is not registered with one of the Preference Services to prevent Direct Marketing. If they are you must adhere to this preference.

You must also ensure you comply with the Privacy Electronic and Communications Regulations (PECR). For more information follow this Link www.ico.org.uk

For the avoidance of doubt the provision of council (and other) officer names and contact details under FOI does not give consent to receive direct marketing via any media and expressly does not constitute a 'soft opt-in' under PECR.

Your rights

If you are unhappy with the way your request for information has been handled, you can request a review within the next 40 working days by writing to the Information Management Team at: foi@barnet.gov.uk. Or by post to Information Management Team (FOI) London Borough of Barnet, 2 Bristol Avenue, Colindale, NW9 4EW

If, having exhausted our review procedure, you remain dissatisfied with the handling of your request or complaint, you will have a right to appeal to the Information Commissioner at: The Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF (telephone: 0303 123 1113; website www.ico.org.uk). There is no charge for making an appeal.