Governance Policy - 1.13 Whistle Blowers Policy for Employees Councillors and Contractors

Policy	Governance Policy – 1.13 Whistle Blowers Policy for Employees Councillors and Contractors
Purpose	The Shire recognises that effectively addressing illegal and undesirable behaviour requires a system where employees and others can report concerns safely and without fear of consequences. The Whistleblower Policy serves as this mechanism, promoting the reporting of such conduct. Supported by the Public Interest Disclosure Act 2003, this policy enables individuals to disclose wrongdoings in Local Government while safeguarding them from retaliation. It encourages employees, elected members, contractors, and consultants to report unlawful, unethical or misconduct cases they believe violate the Shire's Code of Conduct, policies or laws.
Status	Administrative – Statutory.

Policy

The objectives of this policy are to:

a) encourage disclosures of potential misconduct.
b) help deter potential misconduct.
c) ensure that individuals who disclose potential misconduct can do so safely, securely and with confidence that they will be protected and supported.
d) ensure that disclosures are dealt with appropriately and on a timely basis.
e) provide transparency around receiving, handling and investigating disclosures; and
f) meet the Shire's legal and regulatory obligations.

The Shire will endeavor to provide protection to 'Whistleblowers' from any detrimental action in reprisal for the making of a public interest disclosure.

Anyone found to have caused harm to someone for speaking up may face disciplinary measures, including termination of employment or engagement.

All documents, records and reports relating to the investigation of reported Misconduct will be confidentially stored and retained in an appropriate and secure manner, in accordance with the Public Disclosure Act 2003.

Who the Policy applies to:

Individuals who have knowledge of possible misconduct are encouraged to report it. This policy applies to an individual who is:

a) a current or former Shire employee, including employees who are permanent, part-time, fixed term or temporary or casual.
b) a service provider or contractor who is providing, or has provided goods or services to the Shire, whether paid or unpaid (e.g. volunteering) including their employees; and
c) a relative, dependent, or spouse of an individual identified in (a) to (b) above.

External advice can be provided by the 'Integrity Advisory Services 'at the Public Sector Commission by phoning 6552 8888.

Reporting

Employees are to report suspected misconduct internally via the:

- Chief Executive Officer; or
- Public Interest Disclosure Officer, which is the role of the Manager of Corporate and Community Services.

Should a whistleblower fear retaliation, reports of misconduct can be provided to:

- The Ombudsman.
- Public Sector Management Commission
- Depending on the nature of the misconduct, it may be appropriate to inform the Police or the Corruption and Crime Commission

Related Procedures	Code of conduct for Council Members, "Committee Members and Candidates Code of Conduct for Staff
Amended Authority Level	Council
Related Delegation	
Related Local Law/Legislation	
Adopted/Amended	2 May 2022
Reviewed Date	23rd July 2024; 22 September 2026