

## ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

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COMMITTEE	Audit, Risk and Scrutiny
DATE	20 November 2014
DIRECTOR	Corporate Governance
TITLE OF REPORT	Scottish Parliament Public Petitions Committee - Whistleblowing
REPORT NUMBER:	CG/14/145
CHECKLIST COMPLETE:	Yes

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### 1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

To advise the Committee of the outcome of the Scottish Parliament Public Petitions Committee's consideration of a petition on whistleblowing in local government. This is currently identified as item 19 on this Committee's work plan.

### 2. RECOMMENDATION(S)

That the Committee notes the decision of the Public Petitions Committee not to proceed with the whistleblowing petition as it was largely about policies which were matters for councillors, and that Audit Scotland and the Accounts Commission, who were responsible for auditing such policies, had not found any weakness which would require to be raised in an annual report.

### 3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are none.

### 4. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

As this decision is being reported for information, there are no direct implications.

### 5. BACKGROUND/MAIN ISSUES

- 5.1 On 29 October, 2013, the Scottish Parliament Public Petitions Committee took evidence on a petition on whistleblowing in local government submitted by Pete Gregson on behalf of the campaign group, Kids Not Suits. A copy is appended to this report.

- 5.2 The Public Petitions Committee agreed to take advice from the Scottish Government, COSLA, Audit Scotland, trades unions and the Ombudsman. Subsequently, it agreed to write again as some organisations had not responded; when the matter was next considered it agreed to write to all Councils on their policies for involving elected members in whistleblowing, and to ask the Accounts Commission and Audit Scotland for information on their scrutiny of local authority whistleblowing policies. This Council responded to that request for information on 9 April, 2014.
- 5.3 In concluding its consideration of the petition in June this year, the Committee noted that Audit Scotland and the Accounts Commission had not identified any weakness in relation to whistleblowing which would require to be raised in an annual report. It also noted that the petition was largely about policies which were a matter for councillors. It therefore closed the petition.

## 6. IMPACT

As the Committee's decision was to take no action, there is no impact arising from its consideration of the petition.

## 7. MANAGEMENT OF RISK

Whilst there is no outcome from the consideration of this petition, whistleblowing is clearly about the management of risk and the officers are currently reviewing the existing policies for whistleblowing, bribery and corruption with a view to consolidating them into one.

## 8. BACKGROUND PAPERS

Reports of the Scottish Parliament Public Petitions Committee of 29 October, 2013 and 14 January, 18 March and 3 June, 2014 on Petition PE1488 on Whistleblowing in Local Government submitted by Pete Gregson on behalf of the campaign group, Kids Not Suits.

## 9. REPORT AUTHOR DETAILS

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