

Governance, Risk and Best Value Committee

10am, Thursday 28 January 2016

Whistleblowing annual report

Item number 7.7

Report number

Executive/routine

Wards

Executive summary

This report provides a high level overview of whistleblowing activity and development of the service during the period 1 December 2014 to 30 November 2015.

Links

Coalition pledges P27

Council outcomes CO15, CO25, CO27

Single Outcome Agreement

Whistleblowing annual report

Recommendations

- 1.1 To note the report.

Background

- 2.1 The Council launched its new confidential hotline, provided by independent company Safecall, on 12 May 2014.
- 2.2 The service was reviewed by employment law specialists from Morton Fraser LLP who reported back to the Monitoring Officer in July 2015, with findings and recommendations reported to the Finance and Resources Committee on 27 August 2015.
- 2.3 Committee decided to continue with the service in its current form, with re-procurement for an independent service provider on expiry of the current contract, and approved an action plan to improve and further develop the service.
- 2.4 The Monitoring Officer's Whistleblowing Team are progressing the action plan and the re-procurement process is under way.

Main report

Reports to Safecall

- 3.1 During the reporting period Safecall received 18 reports:

Category	Number of disclosures
Major/significant qualifying disclosures	2
Minor/operational qualifying disclosures	10
Non-qualifying disclosures	6

Investigations

- 3.2 Six investigations were completed during the reporting period with outcomes and management action reported quarterly to the Governance, Risk and Best Value Committee. Six investigations are ongoing and will be reported to the Governance, Risk and Best Value Committee on completion.
- 3.3 Six reports did not qualify as disclosures under the whistleblowing policy but the Whistleblowing Team sought assurances that the concerns raised were being addressed via the appropriate channels eg. customer complaints process, grievance procedure, where appropriate.
- 3.4 Investigation skills training for Investigating Officers is included in the action plan for implementation early in 2016.

Outcomes

- 3.5 Many of the recommendations that have resulted from investigations have led to amendments to policy, improvements to procedures and processes, the development and sharing of best practice and improved service delivery.
- 3.6 Where the service provider has an open line of communication with the whistleblower they have been able to provide feedback on the outcome of an investigation and where this has not been possible they have stored the information for dissemination to the whistleblower should they make further contact.

Improvement objectives

- 3.7 Full implementation of the review action plan will deliver a range of improvements identified during the course of the review:
 - 3.7.1 full alignment and cross referencing between the Whistleblowing and other HR policies, including the development of an aligned investigation framework
 - 3.7.2 the development of a formal process and improved guidance for managers receiving internal disclosures
 - 3.7.3 the development of an experienced, skilled internal pool of investigating managers trained on the investigation framework, approach and techniques
 - 3.7.4 improved staff engagement including a refreshed communications strategy, distribution of promotional materials, improved Orb guidance and feedback via the 2016 Employee Survey
 - 3.7.8 improved awareness of policy requirements and associated processes through a programme of briefings and awareness sessions for groups of staff who might be involved in the process eg. senior managers, directorate liaison officers.

Measures of success

- 4.1 Implementation of the review action plan in full in time for the start of the new contract on 12 May 2016.
- 4.2 Improved satisfaction levels through bi-annual Employee Survey.

Financial impact

- 5.1 The cost of the whistleblowing service between 1 December 2014 and 30 November 2015 was £45,774.70.
- 5.2 The costs are within the estimated budget for the pilot and are monitored regularly.

Risk, policy, compliance and governance impact

- 6.1 The whistleblowing policy was developed and agreed to complement existing management reporting arrangements and to ensure employees have the right to raise concerns in the knowledge that they will be taken seriously, that matters will be investigated appropriately and confidentiality will be maintained.

Equalities impact

- 7.1 There are no direct equalities implications arising from this report.

Sustainability impact

- 8.1 There are no sustainability implications arising from this report.

Consultation and engagement

- 9.1 Consultation was undertaken with the trades unions to secure a local agreement.
- 9.2 A range of stakeholders, including whistleblowers and trades unions, were consulted during the pilot review.

Background reading/external references

[Finance and Resources Committee 19 September 2013: item 7.2 - Revised Whistleblowing Policy](#)

Andrew Kerr

Chief Executive

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Links

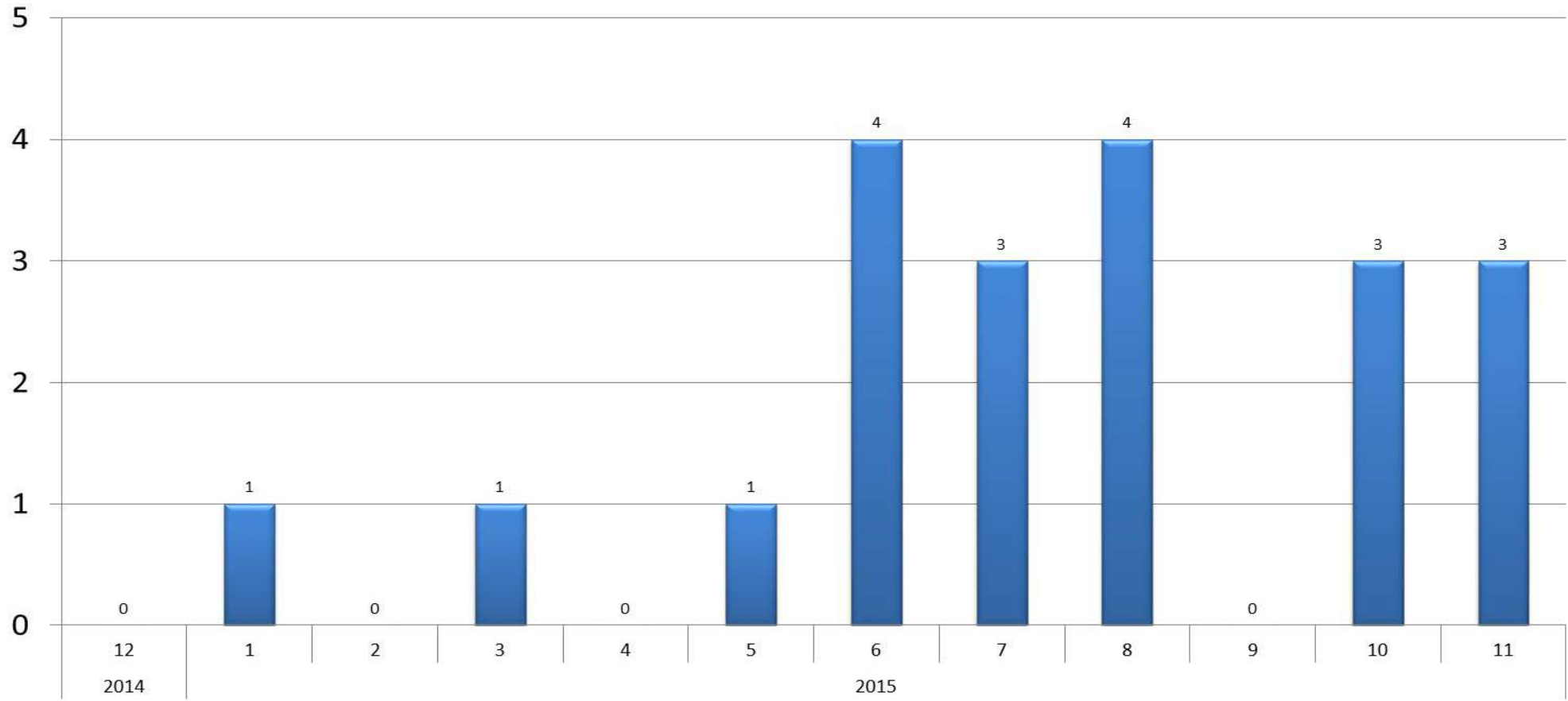
Coalition pledges	P27 – seek to work in full partnership with Council staff and their representatives.
Council outcomes	CO15 – the public is protected. CO25 – the Council has efficient and effective services that deliver on objectives. CO27 – the Council supports, invests in and develops our people.
Single Outcome Agreement Appendices	

Annual report for The City of Edinburgh Council

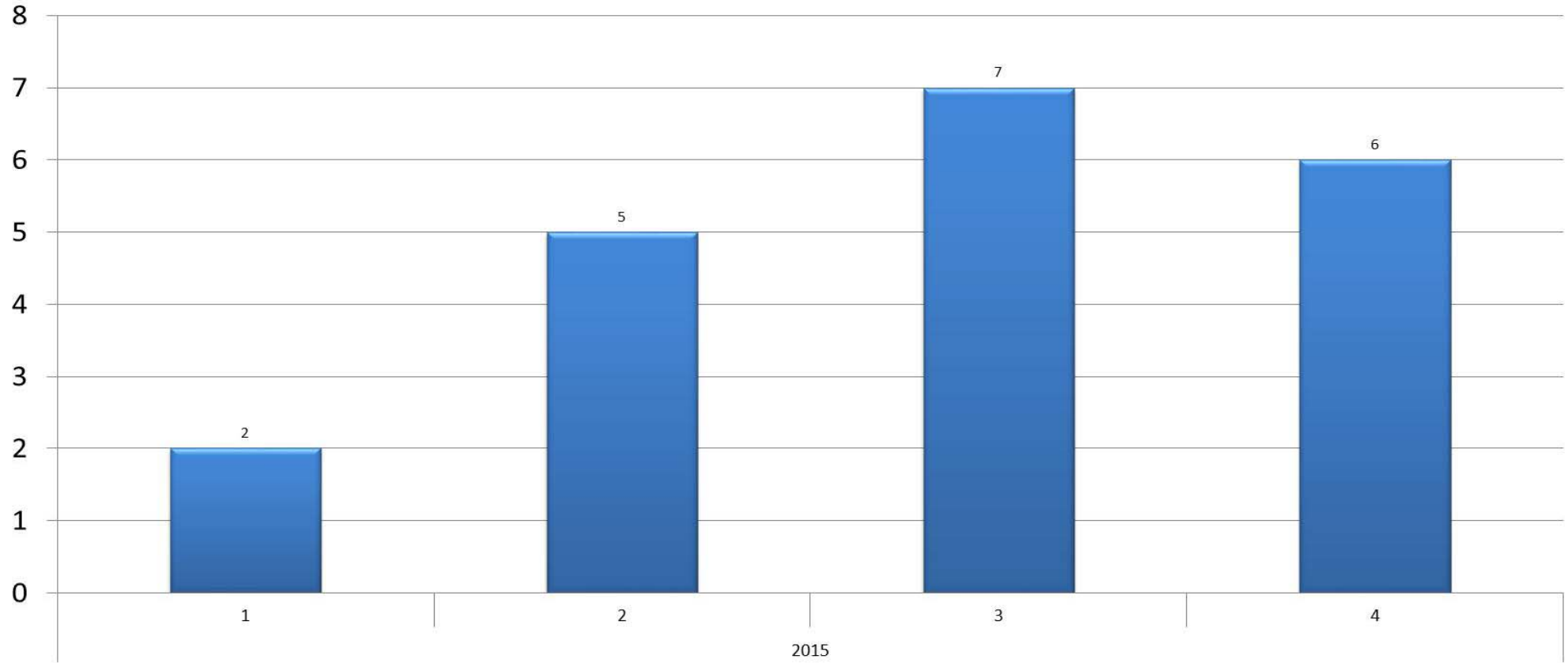
Period - 1st December 2014 to 30th November 2015

(Note: call volumes include repeat contact)

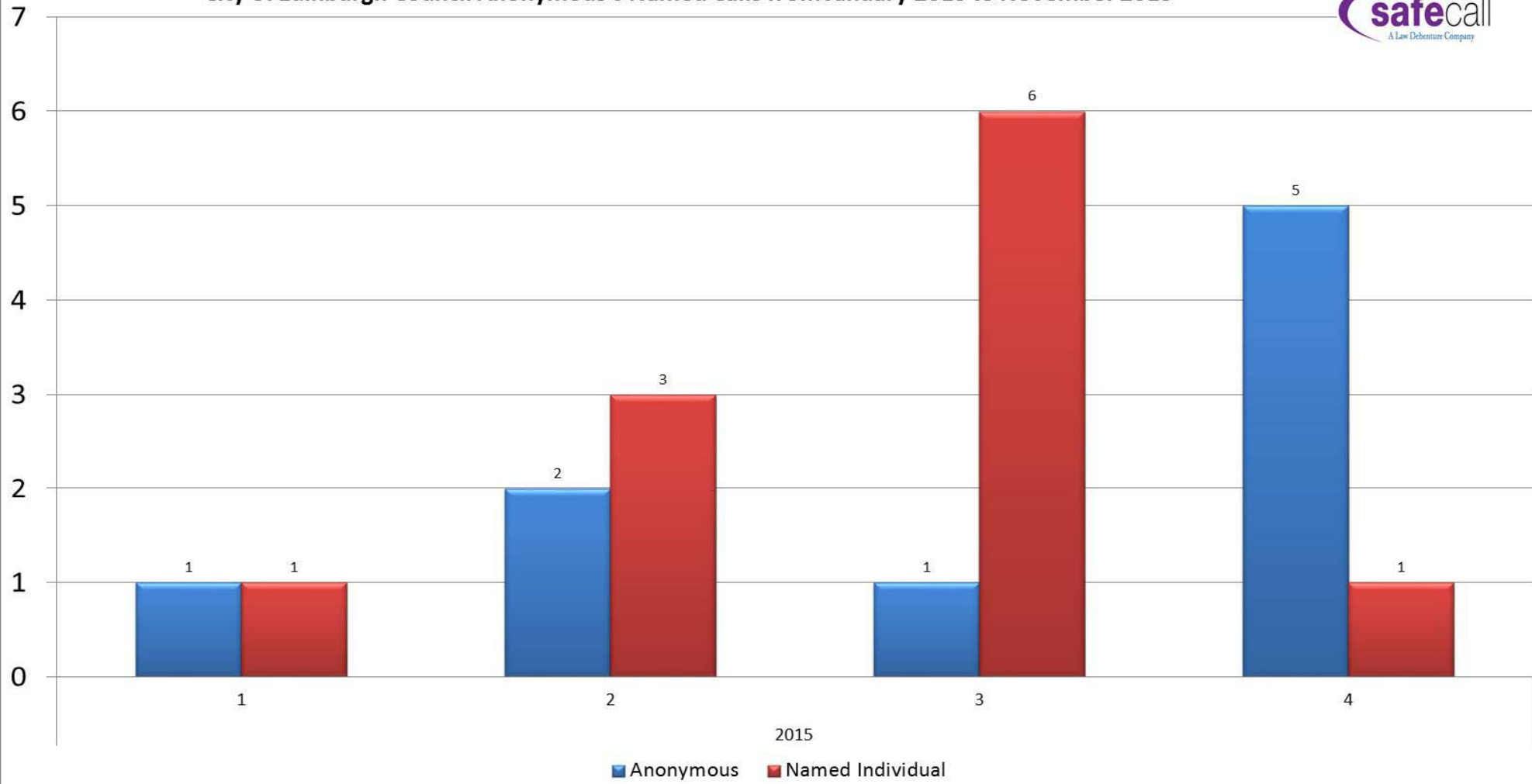
Calls per Month City of Edinburgh Council



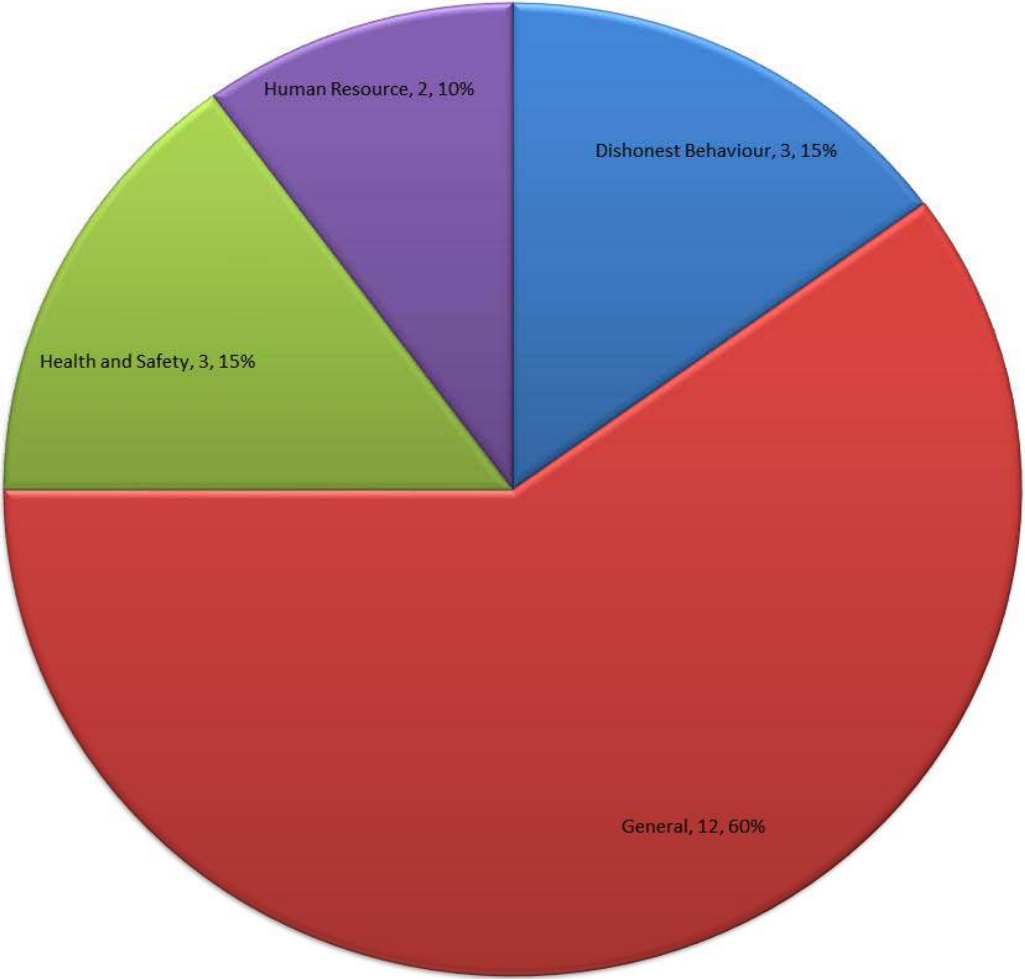
Calls per Quarter City of Edinburgh Council



City of Edinburgh Council Anonymous v Named Calls from January 2015 to November 2015

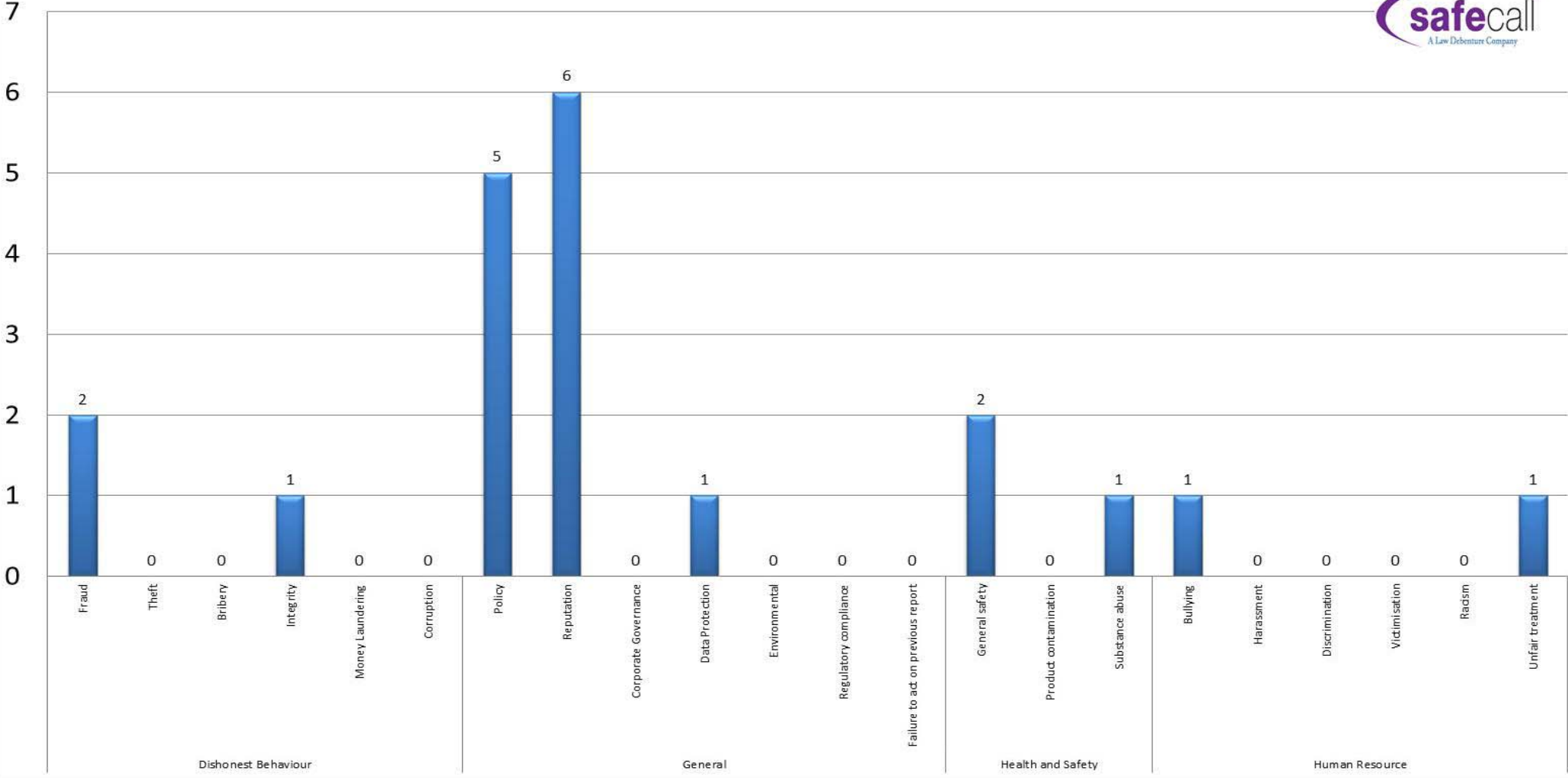


Calls By Classification City of Edinburgh Council from December 2014 to November 2015

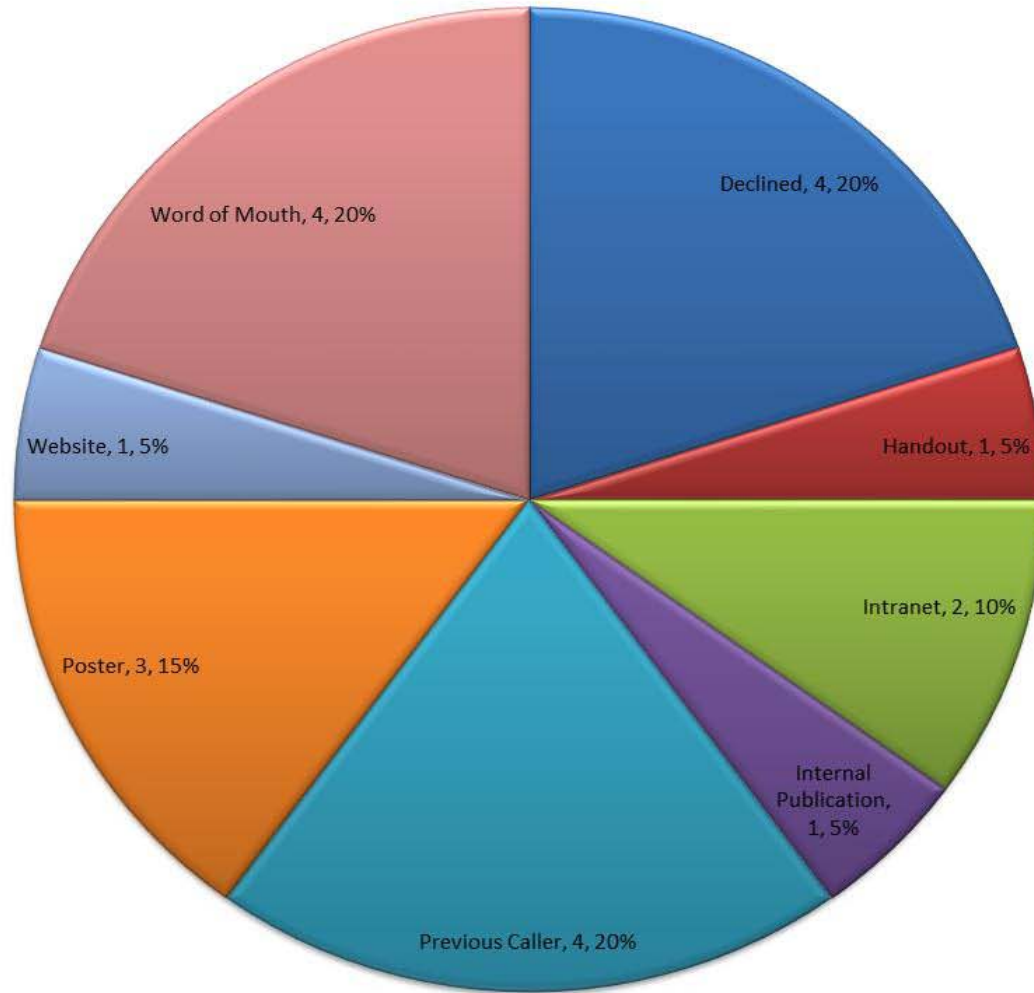


- Dishonest Behaviour
- General
- Health and Safety
- Human Resource

Calls by Sub Classification City of Edinburgh Council from December 2014 to November 2015

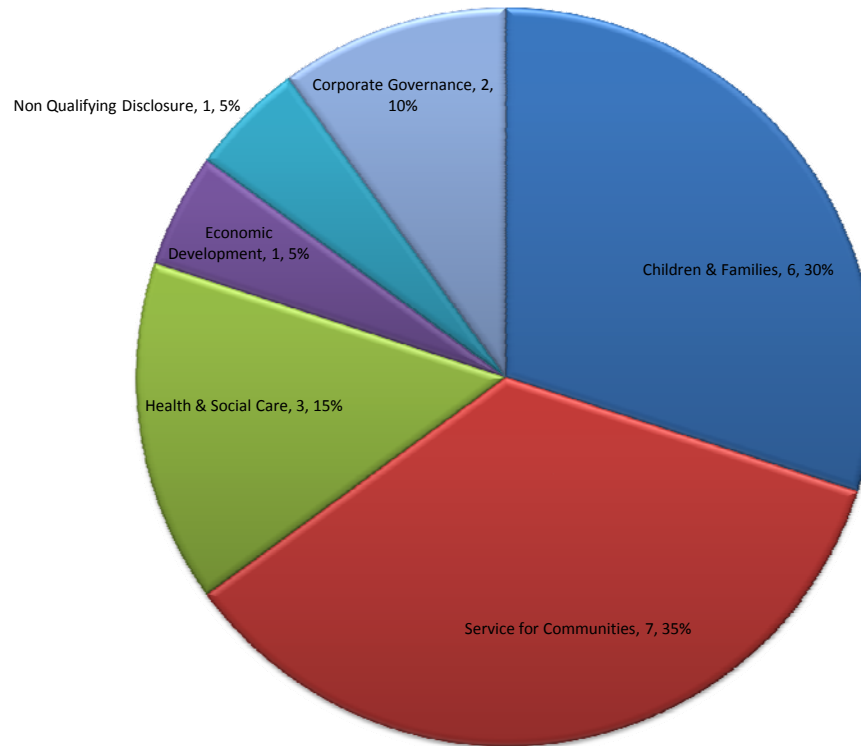


City of Edinburgh Council - How caller became aware of Safecall from December 2014 to November 2015



Calls By Directorate from December 2014 to November 2015

Children & Families	6
Service for Communities	7
Health & Social Care	3
Economic Development	1
Non Qualifying Disclosure	1
Chief Executives Office	0
Corporate Governance	2
	20



■ Children & Families ■ Service for Communities ■ Health & Social Care ■ Economic Development ■ Non Qualifying Disclosure ■ Chief Executives Office ■ Corporate Governance