

Report to the Council

Committee: Audit & Governance Committee

Date: 20 December 2018

Subject: Anti-Fraud & Corruption Strategy

Chairman: Councillor J. Knapman

Recommending:

That the Council's revised Anti-Fraud and Corruption Strategy be approved.

Report:

1. The Anti-Fraud and Corruption Strategy is an integral part of the Council's overall governance framework. It is designed to encourage prevention and promote the detection of both fraud and corruption against the Council. The Strategy sets out the expectation that Members, employees, individuals and organisations will be honest and fair in any dealings they might have with the Council.
2. It is responsibility of the management of the authority to take action to mitigate fraud risks through expecting high standards of conduct and operating strong systems of internal control. Any loss through fraud and other irregularity is a drain on resources which, in turn, reduces the funds available for service delivery and to support those in genuine need. It is equally important that those working for and with the Council have a clear understanding of the Council's standards and expectations through effective communication and monitoring.
3. The Council keeps the threats from fraud under continuous review, to ensure that it allocates resources to the highest identified areas of existing and emerging risks. However, there is always scope for improvement in its responsiveness to emerging risks and pressures. The Council needs to continue to monitor its mechanisms for assessing the risk of fraud and having the means to share information and quantify the outcome whenever fraud occurs.
4. The Anti-Fraud and Corruption Strategy has recently been reviewed by the Audit and Governance Committee, to incorporate amendments around the prevention of bribery introduced by the Public Contracts Regulations 2015. The revised Strategy also strengthens anti-corruption elements in light of the new United Kingdom Anti-Corruption Strategy for 2017-2022, which sets out a long-term framework for tackling corruption. The revised version of the Anti-Fraud and Corruption Strategy is attached as Appendix 1 to this report.
5. Once approved, the revised Strategy will be published on the Council's internet and intranet and its provisions conveyed to all staff via the staff newsletter District Lines. Training will be provided as appropriate through the Corporate Fraud Team Strategy so that awareness of roles and responsibilities is further cascaded to all staff.

6. We recommend as set out at the commencement of this report.