

21 September 2017

ITEM: 6

Standards and Audit Committee

Counter Fraud & Investigation Annual Strategy

Wards and communities affected:

All

Key Decision:

Key

Report of: David Kleinberg, Group Manager Counter Fraud & Investigation

Accountable Assistant Director: N/A

Accountable Director: Sean Clark, Director of Finance and IT

This report is Public

Executive Summary

The Counter Fraud & Investigation Department (CFID) is responsible for protecting the council from fraud and economic crime.

This report describes the strategy for the ensuing year to improve the council's stance and identification methods as well as improve the counter-fraud culture.

The approach is about target hardening the council's business from attack by criminals but ensuring that we continue to deliver our core business of providing services to our residents and visitors to Thurrock.

1. Recommendation(s)

1.1 The Audit Committee agrees the counter-fraud strategy and work plan for the ensuing year.

2. Introduction & Background

2.1 Fraud and other economic crime such as money laundering and corruption are unfortunate realities for any organisation, particularly large employers like Thurrock Council where we process millions of transactions every year.

2.2 Our key focus is delivering services to our residents, businesses and visitors where we are entrusted to use public money effectively and without disruption. Criminals do and will continue to seek to take advantage of those services with attempts to divert valuable assets away from those in need.

2.3 Thurrock Council is serious about maintaining excellence in service delivery responding well to requests for support but continuing to maintain a strong stance to cases of proven fraud.

2.4 In order for our business processes to deliver what they are designed to do CFID works closely with business areas to ensure that where incidents of fraud do occur we can respond appropriately and keep those cases to an absolute minimum.

3. Strategy

3.1 This year CFID will be renewing our understanding of each and every business process to ensure that we are delivering those services in a way that still delivers what they are designed to do whilst recognising and responding correctly where fraud risk may be present.

3.2 **Appendix 1** details the work programme for the ensuing year outlining where CFID's counter-fraud experts will be engaging with the business areas and our key stakeholders, including our supply chain to minimise the risk from fraud.

4. Reasons for Recommendation

4.1 This report provides a detailed update to the Committee on the improved counter-fraud measures for the Council and how it is reducing fraud under the council's counter-fraud strategy.

5. Consultation (including Overview and Scrutiny, if applicable)

5.1 This approach and methodology was presented to all managers, directors and head of services in the Thurrock Council Manager's conference providing opportunities to discuss and respond.

6. Impact on corporate policies, priorities, performance and community impact

6.1 Work undertaken by to reduce fraud and enhance the Council's anti-fraud and corruption culture contributes to the delivery of all its aims and priorities supporting corporate governance.

7. Implications

7.1 Financial

Implications verified by: **Sean Clark**
Head of Corporate Finance

There are no financial implications contained in this report.

7.2 Legal

Implications verified by: **David Lawson**
Monitoring Officer, Deputy Head of Legal Services

The Accounts and Audit (England) Regulations 2015 section 4 (2) require that:

The relevant body shall be responsible for ensuring that the financial management of the body is adequate and effective and that the body has a sound system of internal control which facilitates the effective exercise of that body's functions and which includes the arrangements for the management of risk.

This proactive and investigative work undertaken by the Directorate as well as the regular monitoring of compliance with the requirements of Fighting Fraud Locally discharges this duty.

7.3 Diversity and Equality

Implications verified by: **Rebecca Price**
Community Development Officer

There are no implications related to this report.

7.4 Other implications (where significant) – i.e. Staff, Health, Sustainability, Crime and Disorder)

None.

8. Background papers used in preparing the report (including their location on the Council's website or identification whether any are exempt or protected by copyright):

None.

9. Appendices to the report

- Appendix 1 – CFID Annual Work Plan for 2017/18

Report Author:

David Kleinberg,
Counter Fraud & Investigation