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| **Report to** | **On** |  |
| **Governance Committee** | **Tuesday, 25 May 2021** |
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| **Title** | **Report of** |
| **Annual review of Council's Counter Fraud Policies** | **Director of Governance and Monitoring Officer** |

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| Is this report confidential? | **No**  |

## Purpose of the Report

1. This report comes before Members to note the revised Anti-Fraud, Bribery and Corruption Policy, the Fraud Response Plan and the Whistleblowing Policy.

## Recommendations

1. Members are asked to note the policies as set out in Appendices A, B and C*.*

## Corporate outcomes

1. The report relates to the following corporate priorities:

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| An exemplary council | x | Thriving communities |  |
| A fair local economy that works for everyone |  | Good homes, green spaces, healthy places |  |

## Background to the report

1. In administering its responsibilities, the Council has a duty to protect public funds and to raise awareness in relation to any potential threats that may affect the financial and/or reputational position of the organisation. The suite of counter fraud policies reinforces the Council’s commitment to the prevention and detection of fraudulent activity. They also support the Local Code of Governance in promoting values for the Council and demonstrating the values of good governance through upholding high standards of conduct and behaviour.

## Counter Fraud Policies

1. The general aim of all the Council’s counter fraud policies is to reduce the occurrence and impact of fraud, corruption and bribery on the organisation and provide an effective channel of communication for anyone who has concerns or suspicions of malpractice.
2. The Council had both an Anti-Fraud and Corruption Statement and Strategy and a separate Bribery Policy. These documents have been combined and revised in light of best practice, particularly the guidance from CIPFA Code of Practice – Managing the Risk of Fraud and Corruption and the four key themes of the Local Government Fraud Strategy – Fighting Fraud and Corruption Locally (2020).
3. The themes comprise the following:
* Acknowledge the responsibility of the governing body for countering fraud and corruption;
* Identify the fraud and corruption risks;
* Develop an appropriate counter fraud and corruption strategy;
* Provide resources to implement the strategy;
* Take action in response to fraud and corruption.

**Fraud Response Plan**

1. This document has been revised to reflect the Council’s current arrangements when a fraud is reported and sets out the responsibilities for those involved.

**Whistleblowing Policy**

1. The Whistleblowing Policy has been amended with a view to making the policy clearer in terms of the roles and responsibilities of officers involved in dealing with referrals from Officers, Members, partner organisations and the public.

**Training and awareness**

1. It is the intention to raise awareness of the revised policies by the completion of mandatory e-learning by officers. The policies will also be available on the Council’s intranet and website.

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## Appendices

**Appendix A – Anti Fraud, Bribery and Corruption Statement and Strategy**

**Appendix B - Fraud Response Plan**

**Appendix C – Whistleblowing Policy**

Dawn Highton

Service Lead Audit and Risk

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