



Audit & Governance Committee
5 June 2024

Counter Fraud Annual Report 2023/24

Purpose of the report:

The report covers the counter fraud work completed in the year from 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024 in accordance with the Counter Fraud Strategy and Framework.

Recommendations:

It is recommended that the Committee:

Notes the fraud activity completed during 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024.

Introduction:

1. The Council's Internal Audit team investigates allegations of fraud and irregularity against the Council and is committed to upholding the Council's Counter Fraud Strategy and Framework 2021-24. The Council's strategy is aligned to the Fighting Fraud and Corruption Locally Strategy which is the governments 'blueprint' for tackling fraud in Local Government.
2. Within Internal Audit, the Counter Fraud Partnership Team comprises four auditors with counter fraud expertise who work across all departments. Together they provide a dedicated proactive counter fraud and responsive investigation function. It also works on behalf of the Council to ensure that its counter-fraud arrangements are robust by raising awareness of fraud risk, reviewing and improving fraud risk management arrangements, using data to actively identify fraudulent activity, and monitoring the extent to which the Council is impacted by fraud. Where fraud is suspected or identified, the team provides a professional investigation service and advises on control measures that will prevent recurrence.

3. The Counter Fraud Annual Report outlines:
- Details of the work undertaken during the period 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024;
 - Outcomes from investigation activities; and
 - Other counter fraud activity.

Conclusions:

4. The committee is asked to note the report.

Financial and value for money implications

5. Counter Fraud activities were delivered within existing budgetary resources.

Equalities and Diversity Implications

6. There are no direct equalities implications.

Risk Management Implications

7. Fraud risk will continue to be monitored and assessed throughout the year.

Legal Implications – Monitoring Officer

8. There are no direct legal implications of this report.

Next steps:

9. The Chief Internal Auditor and Audit Manager (Counter Fraud) will continue to update management and members on the completion of counter fraud activities throughout the year.

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Sources/background papers:

- Counter Fraud Strategy and Framework

Annexes/Appendices:

- Annex A - Internal Audit Counter Fraud Report 2023/24
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