



## AUDIT & GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

Monday, 08 January 2024

<b>Subject</b>	Anti-Fraud and Corruption Strategy 2023
<b>Cabinet Member</b>	Councillor Vince Langdon-Morris Cabinet Member with responsibility for Resources and Value for Money Councillor Tim Wilson Assistant Cabinet Member for Resources and Value for Money
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Is the report Open or Exempt?	OPEN
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Category of Exempt Information and reason why it is <b>NOT</b> in the public interest to disclose the exempt information.	Not Applicable.
<b>Wards Affected:</b>	All Wards

## Purpose and high-level overview

### **Purpose of Report:**

To provide a strategic overview to the Audit and Governance Committee of the updated Anti-Fraud and Corruption Strategy 2023 and to acknowledge the procedures to be undertaken by the Corporate Fraud Service. To ensure Members are aware of the Strategy etc.

### **Options:**

No alternative options are presented in relation to this Strategy

### **Recommendation/s:**

That Audit and Governance Committee comments upon and endorses the updated Anti-Fraud and Corruption Strategy 2023.

## Corporate Impact Assessment

### **Governance:**

This updated Anti-Fraud and Corruption Strategy supports the Council's governance framework by setting out the principles of how the Corporate Fraud Service intends to manage and respond to fraud risk in coming financial years.

### **ESC Fraud policies and strategies that directly apply to the proposal:**

This report has links to the Council's:

- Anti Bribery Policy
- Corporate Fraud Policy and response Plan
- Code of Corporate Governance
- Whistleblowing Policy

### **Environmental:**

This report does not include direct links to the Council's strategic environmental aims.

### **Equalities and Diversity:**

This report does not require the completion of an Equalities Impact Assessment.

### **Financial:**

This report has some potential financial implications due to any irregular activity within the Council and/or partnerships that may have financial implications etc.

### **Human Resources:**

Currently this report does not have any direct staffing implications.

### **ICT:**

This report does not have any direct ICT (Information Communications Technician) implications.

### **Legal:**

The Corporate Fraud Service adheres to several statutory powers including but not limited to primary legislation:

- Bribery Act 2010
- Fraud Act 2006
- Prevention of Social Housing Fraud Act 2013
- Proceeds of Crime Act 2002
- Theft Act 1968 /78

**Risk:**

This Anti-Fraud and Corruption Strategy sets out how the Corporate Fraud Service intends to manage the risk of fraud and other irregularities within the council and/or its partnerships.

**External Consultees:** No external parties were consulted in the preparation of this report.

## Strategic Plan Priorities

Select the priorities of the <a href="#">Strategic Plan</a> which are supported by this proposal: <i>(Select only one primary and as many secondary as appropriate)</i>		Primary priority	Secondary priorities
<b>T01</b>	<b>Growing our Economy</b>		
P01	Build the right environment for East Suffolk	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P02	Attract and stimulate inward investment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P03	Maximise and grow the unique selling points of East Suffolk	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P04	Business partnerships	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P05	Support and deliver infrastructure	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>T02</b>	<b>Enabling our Communities</b>		
P06	Community Partnerships	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P07	Taking positive action on what matters most	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P08	Maximising health, well-being and safety in our District	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P09	Community Pride	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>T03</b>	<b>Maintaining Financial Sustainability</b>		
P10	Organisational design and streamlining services	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P11	Making best use of and investing in our assets	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P12	Being commercially astute	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P13	Optimising our financial investments and grant opportunities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P14	Review service delivery with partners	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>T04</b>	<b>Delivering Digital Transformation</b>		
P15	Digital by default	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P16	Lean and efficient streamlined services	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P17	Effective use of data	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P18	Skills and training	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P19	District-wide digital infrastructure	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>T05</b>	<b>Caring for our Environment</b>		

P20	Lead by example	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P21	Minimise waste, reuse materials, increase recycling	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P22	Renewable energy	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
P23	Protection, education and influence	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
XXX	<b>Governance</b>		
XXX	How ESC governs itself as an authority	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p><b>How does this proposal support the priorities selected?</b></p> <p>The updated Council's Anti-Fraud and Corruption Strategy is the Council's procedures alongside the Bribery Act Policy. Nationally it is a key element in any Council's governance framework, designed to reduce the risk of fraud, corruption, and abuse in the delivery of local services.</p>			

## Background and Justification for Recommendation

1 Background facts	
1.1	The Council maintains a zero-tolerance approach towards fraud and corruption, and the existence of a professional Corporate Fraud Service demonstrates the Council's commitment to this objective.
1.2	<p>This revised Anti-Fraud and Corruption Strategy sets out the Council's position on fraud issues aligned to the Bribery Act Policy that affect the services of the Council and member of the public. This Strategy is a natural extension of seeking to provide the best possible service to the public.</p> <p>Regardless of the law, the Councils position is, and always has been, that we have a zero tolerance to anyone committing fraud.</p>
1.3	In addition, the Fighting Fraud and Corruption Locally 2020 is the current national strategy for council leaders, chief executives, finance directors, and all those charged with governance in local authorities to use in defending against fraud in local government. This Strategy is in addition to the CIPFA (Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy), Code of Practice on managing the Risk of Fraud and Corruption.
1.4	The Corporate Fraud Plan is produced annually to support delivery of the aims set out in the overarching Anti-Fraud and Corruption Strategy. The Corporate Fraud Plan is also a direct response to meeting national strategy, guidance, and achieving the Council's Strategic Plan objectives. It is a key contributor to enabling the Government's austerity measures in reducing public expenditure by reducing fraud. It also defines the Council's proactive and reactive anti-fraud work.
1.5	At East Suffolk Council the Corporate Fraud Team involved in the procedures within the Anti-Fraud and Corruption Strategy is managed by the Head of Internal Audit Services.

2 Current position	
2.1	A key responsibility within the Audit and Governance Committee's terms of reference is to 'Monitor the counter-fraud strategy, activity and resources'.

2.2	The Corporate Fraud Service will continue to focus activities as directed by the Head of Internal Audit, who also leads this service area at Ipswich Borough Council.
2.3	Further development and enhancement in the field of pro-active corporate fraud activity including promotion of the anti-fraud policies, Whistleblowing, Bribery, Corruption Policies etc. This will be based upon the ever-changing increased fraud risk assessments of various Council sections as an ongoing matter.

### 3 How to address current situation

3.1	The Council has an obligation to protect public funds. The refreshed Anti-Fraud and Corruption Strategy sets out how East Suffolk Council will act to prevent and respond to fraud or improper or unlawful activities.
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### 4 Reason/s for recommendation

4.1	To fulfil the Audit and Governance Committee's responsibility to monitor the counter-fraud strategy.
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## Appendices

### Appendices:

<b>Appendix A</b>	Anti Fraud and Corruption Strategy
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### Background reference papers:

None