



# **Title of report: Counter Fraud and Corruption Strategy Update**

**Meeting: Audit and governance committee**

**Meeting date: Monday 28 June 2021**

**Report by: Cabinet member corporate strategy and budget**

## **Classification**

Open

## **Decision type**

This is not an executive decision

## **Wards affected**

(All Wards);

## **Purpose**

For the committee to review and approve the updated Counter Fraud and Corruption Strategy 2021-2024 attached at appendix A and consider recommendations for improvements. The strategy has been updated following the committee's initial review at its meeting on 26 January 2021.

## **Recommendation(s)**

**That:**

- a) the updated Counter Fraud and Corruption Strategy 2021-2024 attached at appendix A be reviewed and the committee determine any recommendations it wishes to make to ensure its effectiveness.

## **Key considerations**

1. This report recommends an updated counter fraud and corruption strategy following the committee's review of the previous version at its meeting 26 January 2021.
2. The counter fraud and corruption strategy attached at appendix A addresses the feedback shared by the committee, specifically:-

<b>Recommended Action</b>	<b>Progress Update</b>
The flowchart in the strategy be amended to include a lessons learnt feedback to management.	Included at Appendix A
Within the strategy where there are references to other pages, policies or documents include the relevant links to the relevant webpage or website.	Included at Appendix A
The role of the committee in connection with the strategy and the action plan be clarified.	The committee's role is defined in the strategy being to ensure its effectiveness
Quarterly updates to the committee be considered.	Updates will be included in internal audit progress updates to the committee.
Clarification to be provided as to who should sign the strategy	The Cabinet member for finance
Change the statement on page 123 of the agenda pack to the council was attempting to be fully compliant with the relevant legislation.	Revised at Appendix A
The strategy come back to the committee for approval when it has been amended	Revised strategy presented today

9. Following committee's approval of the revised strategy this will be cascaded within wider communication updates to all staff identifying the new Intranet landing page, referral form and a new mandatory training e learning module for all staff to complete.

## Community impact

10. The strategy at Appendix A will protect public resources and support the code of corporate governance principle which states that:

- a. Implementing good practices in transparency, reporting, and audit to deliver effective accountability. Herefordshire Council must ensure that those making decisions and delivering services are accountable for them. To support effective accountability the council is committed to reporting on actions completed and outcomes achieved, and ensuring stakeholders are able to understand and respond as the council plans and carries out its activities in a transparent manner. External and internal audit contribute to effective accountability.

## **Environmental Impact**

Whilst this is a decision on back office functions and will have minimal environmental impacts, consideration has been made to minimise waste and resource use in line with the Council's Environmental Policy, for example through the use of energy efficient methods of communications.

## **Equality duty**

Under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010, the 'general duty' on public authorities is set out as follows:

A public authority must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to –

- a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;
  - b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
  - c) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.
16. The public sector equality duty (specific duty) requires us to consider how we can positively contribute to the advancement of equality and good relations, and demonstrate that we are paying 'due regard' in our decision making in the design of policies and in the delivery of services. As this is a decision on a back office strategy, we do not believe that it will have an impact on our equality duty.

## **Resource implications**

17. There are no direct resource implications related to this report.

## **Legal implications**

18. There are no legal implications arising from the recommendations.

## **Risk management**

19. The council undertakes a fraud risk assessment against risks and looks ahead for future potential fraud and corruption risks. Risks will be added to the service risk register and managed according to the risk management plan. All allegations of fraud and corruption will be risk assessed in determining the correct response.

## **Consultees**

20. None

## **Appendices**

Appendix A Counter Fraud and Corruption Strategy 2021-2024

## **Background papers**

None identified