

Management Committee

20 September 2016

Joint Anti Fraud and Corruption Strategy

For Decision

Briefholder

Councillor J Cant, Finance and Assets

Senior Leadership Team Contact:

J Vaughan, Strategic Director

Report Author: J Strange, Head of Financial Services

Statutory Authority

Both the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 and Section 151 of the Local Government Act 1972 give statutory responsibilities to the Monitoring Officer and Chief Finance Officer.

Purpose of Report

- 1 To set out the updated Anti Fraud and Corruption Strategy for the Partnership

Officer Recommendations

- 2 That Members adopt the Joint Anti Fraud and Corruption Strategy

Reason for Recommendation

- 3 To ensure the Dorset Councils Partnership has an up to date strategy which reflects best practice.

Background and Reason Decision Needed

- 4 Each council within the Dorset Councils Partnership has always set itself high standards for both Members and Officers in the operation and administration of the Council's affairs and has always dealt promptly with any allegations or suspicions of fraud and corruption. It has in place policies and procedures to prevent fraud and corruption, including a well promoted Whistleblowing Policy which is issued to staff on an annual basis.
- 5 The Strategy clearly identifies each Council's commitment to an effective Anti Fraud and Corruption Strategy as part of its overall Corporate Governance arrangements. This Strategy is designed to:
 - Encourage prevention
 - Promote detection and
 - Identify a clear path for investigations.

- 6 Each Council also expects that individuals, partners and organisations (e.g. suppliers / contractors) that it comes into contact with, will act towards the Council with integrity and without thought or actions involving fraud or corruption.
- 7 The previous Partnership Strategy and the North Dorset District Council Strategy have been reviewed and were very similar in content. The proposed Strategy for the Dorset Councils Partnership has been updated to reflect current job titles and the latest Corporate Plans. References to the Audit Commission have also been removed as the organisation no longer exists. Instead the definitions for Fraud have been included from the Fraud Act 2006. No other changes were required as the Strategy still reflects best practice.
- 8 The Strategy was considered by the Joint Advisory Accounts and Audit Committee on 4 July 2016 and recommended it for approval. The Strategy will next be due for review in June 2018.

Implications

Financial

- 9 The Strategy sets out the approach to recovery of losses from fraud. A number of contingency days are included within the Internal Audit Plan to undertake special investigations as required by the Strategy.

Risk Management (including Health & Safety)

- 10 A strong and robust approach to fraud and corruption will encourage detection and set out the sanctions that would apply if caught, which should in turn reduce the risk of fraud occurring.

Human Resources

- 11 Both the Code of Conduct for Employees and the Disciplinary Policy may be applied to investigations

Consultation and Engagement

- 12 The Strategy sets out how the Council will deal with allegations of fraud, corruption or other irregularities, with both internal and external reports.

Appendices

- 13 Appendix 1 – Joint Anti Fraud and Corruption Strategy, including the Fraud Response Plan at Annex A

Footnote

Issues relating to financial, environmental, economic and equalities implications have been considered and any information relevant to the decision is included within the report.

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