

**SUBJECT: SIX MONTHLY FRAUD AND ERROR REPORT**

**DIRECTORATE: CHIEF EXECUTIVE AND TOWN CLERK**

**REPORT AUTHOR: AMANDA STANISLAWSKI, AUDIT MANAGER**

## **1. Purpose of Report**

- 1.1 This report informs Committee of performance against the 2024/25 Counter Fraud Work Plan and the outcomes of pro-active fraud work and investigations carried out to date.

## **2. Background**

- 2.1 The responsibility for fraud prevention, monitoring and reporting is spread throughout the Council with Internal Audit collating the data and reporting to Committee.
- 2.2 The attached report summarises the activity which has taken place during the last six months including both proactive and reactive responses.

## **3. Six Monthly Update**

- 3.1 The Audit Committee receive a six-monthly Fraud and Error update report (Counter Fraud Report). This is linked to its terms of reference covering monitoring of the Counter Fraud Strategy and contributes to the overall governance arrangements of the authority and the annual governance statement.
- 3.2 The report summarises the number of cases so far for 2024/25.
- 3.3 Progress made against completing the actions within the Counter Fraud Action Plan is detailed within the report. There are nine items on the plan for 2024/25, five of which are not due until quarter four. Work is in progress or has been completed for those due.
- 3.4 Whistleblowing/Confidential reporting referrals have slightly increased from five to eight for the same period. Allegations have also changed with an increase in Environmental Health related referrals. Action has been taken in all of these cases, five have been cleared with no issues, one has been referred to the DWP and the other two remain under review.
- 3.5 The 2022 National Fraud Initiative has been drawn to a close with 35 errors being identified and estimated savings/overpayments totalling just over £67,000. The first set of datasets for the 2024 review have been submitted.
- 3.6 There have not been any frauds identified in other areas of the Council.

#### **4. Organisational Impacts**

##### **4.1 Finance (including whole life costs where applicable)**

There are no direct financial implications.

##### **4.2 Legal Implications including Procurement Rules**

There are no direct legal implications.

##### **4.3 Equality, Diversity and Human Rights**

The Public Sector Equality Duty means that the Council must consider all individuals when carrying out their day-to-day work, in shaping policy, delivering services and in relation to their own employees.

It requires that public bodies have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination
- Advance equality of opportunity
- Foster good relations between different people when carrying out their activities

Due to the nature of the report, no specific Equality Impact Analysis is required.

#### **5. Recommendation**

##### **5.1 The Audit Committee consider and comment on the contents of the report and appendix.**

<b>Is this a key decision?</b>	No
<b>Do the exempt information categories apply?</b>	No
<b>Does Rule 15 of the Scrutiny Procedure Rules (call-in and urgency) apply?</b>	No
<b>How many appendices does the report contain?</b>	One
<b>List of Background Papers:</b>	None

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