

# Audit Committee

Item No.

<b>Report title:</b>	<b>Counter Fraud, Bribery and Corruption (and Whistleblowing) Audit Committee Progress Report</b>
<b>Date of meeting:</b>	<b>31<sup>st</sup> January 2019</b>
<b>Responsible Chief Officer:</b>	<b>Chief Legal Officer</b>
<b>Strategic impact</b>  It is the role of the Audit Committee to have oversight of the effectiveness of the anti-fraud and corruption and whistleblowing arrangements of the Council including the strategy, policies and any associated guidance.	

## Executive summary

The Norfolk Audit Service (NAS) Anti-Fraud, Bribery and Corruption Strategy and Activity Plan 2017-2018 was approved by the Audit Committee on 21 September 2017.

**Appendix A** of this report provides an update in respect of the counter fraud activity undertaken by NAS during the current financial year.

Key messages are that:

- A new Counter Fraud Hub has been agreed between the Norfolk Local Authorities that will assist with the detection of fraud and error in areas such as Council Tax Reduction Schemes, Business Rates, Adult Social Care and Mortality Fraud
- A new whistleblowing policy has been developed and agreed to meet national standards and best practice
- A working group has been established with the aim of ensuring that conflicts of interest and gifts and hospitality are robustly managed throughout the Council
- A survey has been developed and promoted to test staff awareness on fraud related matters within the Council and further promote the Council's Fraud, Bribery and Corruption e-learning

### Recommendations:

Committee Members are asked to consider and agree the Anti-Fraud, Bribery and Corruption and Whistleblowing Audit Committee Progress Report (**Appendix A**), the key messages, that the progress is satisfactory, and arrangements are effective.

## 1. Introduction

### **Anti-Fraud, Bribery and Corruption and Whistleblowing Progress Report**

The Norfolk Audit Service (NAS) Anti-Fraud, Bribery and Corruption Strategy and Activity Plan continues to direct the proactive anti-fraud work undertaken by NAS.

Following production of the anti-fraud annual report (2017-2018) in July 2018; the report at **Appendix A** provides an update in respect of the significant pro-active and reactive anti-fraud, bribery and corruption activity undertaken during the current financial year.

Furthermore, an update in respect of the Council's Whistleblowing provision can be found in section 4 of the report. A Whistleblowing Activity Plan is being prepared and will be reported to a future committee.

The CIPFA Fraud and Corruption tracker summary report 2018 is attached at **Appendix B** for reference.

## 2. Financial Implications

There are no additional financial implications.

## 3. Issues, Risks and Innovation

**Financial Risks** – The risk of loss to public funds because of fraudulent activity occurring within, or external to the Council.

**Reputational Risks** – The risk of reputational damage because of fraudulent activity occurring within, or external to the Council.

## 4. Background information

Norfolk Audit Service (NAS) leads on the strategic delivery of Counter Fraud, Bribery and Anti-Corruption work across all NCC's services. The aim is to protect the public purse, NCC, its staff and its service users from corrupt activities that would undermine NCC's aims and objectives of meeting public service requirements.

The NAS Anti-Fraud, Bribery and Corruption Strategy and activity plan sets out and provides information on NCC's response to the document '**Fighting Fraud and Corruption Locally (FFCL)**', The local government counter fraud and corruption strategy 2016 – 2019'.

To support NAS in implementing appropriate measures, a suite of anti-crime goals has been developed (that encompass the FFCL strategy) in the following areas:

**Govern:** Having robust arrangements and executive support to ensure anti-fraud, bribery and corruption measures are embedded throughout NCC.

**Acknowledge:** acknowledging and understanding fraud risks and committing support and resource to tackling fraud to maintain a robust anti-fraud response.

**Prevent:** preventing and detecting more fraud by making better use of information

and technology, enhancing fraud controls and processes and developing a more effective anti-fraud culture.

**Pursue:** punishing fraudsters and prioritising the recovery of losses via a triple track approach (Civil, Criminal or Disciplinary), developing capability and capacity to investigate fraudsters and developing a more collaborative and supportive law enforcement response.

## **Officer Contact**

If you have any questions about matters contained in this paper or want to see copies of any assessments, i.e. equality impact assessment, please get in touch with:

**Officer name :**     **Adrian Thompson**                             **Tel No. :**     01603 222784

**Email address :**   adrian.thompson@norfolk.gov.uk

**Support :**             **Andrew Reeve**                             **Tel No. :**     01603 222746

**Email address :**   andrew.reeve@norfolk.gov.uk



If you need this report in large print, audio, braille, alternative format or in a different language please contact 0344 800 8020 or 0344 800 8011 (textphone) and we will do our best to help.