

TONBRIDGE & MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL

AUDIT COMMITTEE

05 April 2016

Report of the Chief Audit Executive

Part 1- Public

Delegated

1 INTERNAL AUDIT AND FRAUD PLAN 2016/17

This report seeks Members approval of the Internal Audit and Fraud Plan for the year 2016/17.

1.1 Introduction

- 1.1.1 The professional standards for Internal Audit require the Chief Audit Executive to establish a risk-based plan to determine the priorities of the internal audit activity, consistent with the organisation's goals. A risk-based Internal Audit Plan has been prepared for the 2016/17 financial year to fulfil this requirement.
- 1.1.2 The Internal Audit Plan has been broadened to include the work plan of the Fraud Team following the transfer of responsibility for the investigation of alleged housing benefit fraud to the DWP. As a result the Plan is now a combined Internal Audit and Fraud Plan.

1.2 Internal Audit and Fraud Plan 2016/17

- 1.2.1 A copy of the proposed Internal Audit and Fraud Plan for 2016/17 is attached at **[Annex 1]** of this report. This is intended to provide Members with a clear picture of how the Council will make use of its Internal Audit and Fraud Team, reflecting on all work to be undertaken by the Team during the financial year.
- 1.2.2 In accordance with the requirements of the Public Sector Internal Audit Standards and CIPFA's Local Government Application Note to the Standards information on the process for developing, resourcing and delivering the Plan is provided in the Plan itself rather than in the covering report.
- 1.2.3 The proposed Plan has been reviewed and endorsed by Management Team and has also been shared with Grant Thornton LLP, the Council's External Auditor.

1.3 Legal Implications

- 1.3.1 The Accounts and Audit Regulations place a statutory requirement on authorities to undertake an adequate and effective internal audit of its accounting records and

of its system of internal control in accordance with the proper practices in relation to internal control. Proper practice is defined as that contained within the Public Sector Internal Audit Standards (PSIAS) and CIPFA's Local Government Application Note to the PSIAS.

- 1.3.2 The Council has a legal duty under s151 of Local Government Act 1972 and the Accounts and Audit Regulations to ensure that there are appropriate systems in place to prevent and detect fraud.
- 1.3.3 The Local Government Act 1972 provides the Council with the ability to investigate and prosecute offences committed against them.

1.4 Financial and Value for Money Considerations

- 1.4.1 An adequate and effective Internal Audit function provides the Council with assurance on the proper, economic, efficient and effective use of Council resources in delivery of services, as well as helping to identify fraud and error that could have an adverse effect on the finances of the Council.
- 1.4.2 Fraud prevention and detection is an area subject to central government focus with initiatives such as Protecting the Public Purse, National Fraud Initiative and Fighting Fraud Locally maintaining a high profile. The message coming from these initiatives is that effective fraud prevention and detection releases resources and minimises losses to the Council through fraud.

1.5 Risk Assessment

- 1.5.1 The Internal Audit and Fraud Plan is intended to ensure that the work of the Internal Audit and Fraud Team is effectively directed. For this very reason, the process for preparing the Plan is itself informed by an assessment of the risks and audit needs of the Council. Members' endorsement of the Internal Audit and Fraud Plan for the year 2016/17 ensures that the status of the Plan is maintained.

1.6 Equality Impact Assessment

- 1.6.1 The decisions recommended through this paper have a remote or low relevance to the substance of the Equality Act. There is no perceived impact on end users.

1.7 Recommendations

- 1.7.1 Members are asked to **consider** and **approve** the Internal Audit and Fraud Plan for the year 2016/17.

Background papers:

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Nil

Samantha Buckland
Chief Audit Executive