

TONBRIDGE & MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET

03 February 2015

Report of the Director of Finance & Transformation

Part 1- Public

Matters for Recommendation to Council

1 UPDATE OF ANTI-FRAUD POLICIES

Summary

This report informs Members of the outcome of a review of the Anti-Fraud Policies of the Council reported to the Audit Committee on 26 January 2015 and Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 27 January 2015. The review has identified that some minor changes are required and recommends that these changes are adopted.

1.1 Introduction

1.1.1 As part of the overall Governance process the Audit Committee undertakes an annual review of the Anti-Fraud Policies. The outcome of this review is also considered by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee. Following the annual review, the policies require adoption by full Council via Cabinet.

1.2 Update

1.2.1 The Policies have been reviewed by both Committees and any additional amendments requested by these committees will be notified to Cabinet at this meeting.

1.2.2 The changes to the policies proposed by officers are minor, reflecting changes in the officers to whom referrals should be made and the removal of references to the Audit Commission due to their pending abolition. Finally a paragraph relating to quarterly staff updates has been removed from the Housing & Council Tax Benefit Anti-Fraud Policy as a quarterly update is now issued to the Financial Services Management Team detailing team performance in relation to all areas of fraud. This is then disseminated to all finance staff.

1.2.3 Members are requested to refer to the report to the meeting of the Audit Committee of 26 January 2015 for specific details of the changes made to the individual policies.

1.3 Legal Implications

1.3.1 These policies are not mandatory but do comply with best practice and refer to the relevant legislation where appropriate.

1.4 Financial and Value for Money Considerations

- 1.4.1 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 minimises losses to organisations through fraud.
- 1.4.2 These policies comply with recognised best practice and reinforce the zero tolerance stance of the Council towards fraud.

1.5 Risk Assessment

- 1.5.1 The policies reflect best practice and the culture of the Council is aimed at minimising the risk of fraud. The policies are supported by the internal control mechanisms in place and form part of the overall control environment of the Council.

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 Cabinet are asked to recommend that Council approve the following policies:
- Anti-Fraud & Corruption Policy
 - Housing & Council Tax Benefit Anti-Fraud Policy
 - Council Tax Reduction, Discounts & Exemptions Anti-Fraud Policy

Background papers:

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Nil

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