

WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL**AUDIT COMMITTEE**
23rd JUNE 2008**UPDATES OF ANTI FRAUD & CORRUPTION POLICY STATEMENT,**
UPDATES OF POLICY AND STRATEGY ON FRAUD
FOR HOUSING AND COUNCIL TAX BENEFIT & PROSECUTION POLICY- UPDATE

OPEN	
COMMUNITY STRATEGY THEME	Internal Organisational Theme
CORPORATE THEME:	Improving Corporacy & Performance
KEY PRIORITY:	Financial and Asset Management
STRATEGY:	Anti-Theft, Fraud & Corruption
CABINET MEMBER:	Councillor John Campion
RESPONSIBLE OFFICER:	Head of Financial Services
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Appendix 1	Anti Fraud & Corruption Policy Statement
Appendix 2	Policy on Fraud for Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit
Appendix 3	Strategy for dealing with Theft, Fraud & Corruption
Appendix 4	Strategy on Fraud for Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit
Appendix 5	Fraud Response plan
Appendix 6	Prosecution Policy

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To propose updated policies, strategies and plans regarding the Council's position on Anti Fraud and Corruption matters.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

The Audit Committee is asked to **RECOMMEND** to Cabinet that:

- 2.1 The updated Anti-Fraud & Corruption Policy statement, the updated Policy on Fraud for Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit, the updated Strategy for dealing with Theft, Fraud & Corruption, the updated Strategy on Fraud for Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit, the updated Fraud Response plan and the updated Prosecution Policy attached as Appendices 1 – 6 respectively be adopted.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 It is best practice that all organisations including local authorities have in place formal policies which uphold and strengthen the Council's culture of honest and open dealings.

- 3.2 The council's current policies and strategies were approved in 2001. A review of the documents had been undertaken and reported to the Audit Committee on the 17th March 2008. This review advised that guidance had recently been issued by the CIPFA Better Governance Forum and this was to be reviewed and reported back to the Audit Committee.
- 3.3 These documents build on the premise that fraud and corruption undermine standards of public service and reduce the resources available for the good of the whole community. They are designed to encourage prevention, promote detection, act as a deterrent and identify a clear pathway for investigation. Further all individuals and organisations associated with the Council are required to act with integrity.
- 3.4 Employees are an important element in the Council's stance against fraud and corruption as they are best placed to identify any examples of impropriety. It is paramount that these documents are available to them to ensure any appropriate action can be taken should the need arise.

4. KEY ISSUES

- 4.1 The Council has in place approved policies and strategies for its anti-theft, fraud and corruption arrangements. These have been subjected to a review and updated documents are attached at Appendices 1 – 6.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 There are no financial implications arising from this report.

6. LEGAL AND POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 Anti-Theft, Fraud and Corruption arrangements are one element of the Council's corporate governance framework.

7. RISK MANAGEMENT

- 7.1 To comply with good Corporate Governance the Council is required to ensure that its arrangements for Anti-Theft, Fraud and corruption are periodically reviewed and in line with best practice.

8. CONCLUSION

- 8.1 The council's documents have been reviewed and proposed revisions are attached to this report.

9. CONSULTEES

- 9.1 CMT

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

Executive – ED 220 - Prosecution Policy update; ED 221 – Policy & Strategy on Fraud – Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit - update – 8th January 2004
Policy & Implementation committee – Policy & strategy for dealing with Theft, Fraud & Corruption – 12th July 2001