

AUDIT COMMITTEE

22 MARCH 2016

AUDIT & COUNTER FRAUD PLAN 2016-17

Report from: Katey Arrowsmith, Head of Audit & Counter Fraud
(Chief Audit Executive)

Summary

This report presents the Audit & Counter Fraud Plan for Medway for 2016-17 for Members approval.

1. Budget and Policy Framework

- 1.1. Council delegates responsibility for the oversight and monitoring of internal audit and counter fraud to the Audit Committee.

2. Background

- 2.1. The Public Sector Internal Audit Standards (Standards) require that: *The chief audit executive must establish risk-based plans to determine the priorities of the internal audit activity, consistent with the organisation's goals.* A risk based plan has been prepared for the authority to meet this requirement. From 1 March 2016 the previously distinct internal audit and investigations teams will be delivered by the Audit & Counter Fraud Shared Service with Gravesham Borough Council. From 2016-17 the work of the service will be directed by Annual Audit & Counter Fraud Plans setting out the work of the team in providing assurance, consultancy, counter-fraud and investigation services.

3. Preparation of the Audit & Counter Fraud Plan

- 3.1. The plan has been prepared in line with the requirements of the Standards and is based on a risk assessment to ensure the team's resources are directed to the highest areas of risk. This assessment includes;
 - Review of the council's priorities as set out in the new Council Plan,
 - Review of the council's key risks as set out in the Corporate Risk Register,
 - Review of the council's budget book,
 - The results of previous internal audit work and the work of other assurance providers to the council;
 - Identification and risk assessment of those activities key to the delivery of the council's priorities and the management of its identified risks.
- 3.2. This risk assessment is matched to the resources available in the team to produce the plan presented at Appendix A.

4. Reporting against the Audit & Counter Fraud Plan

- 4.1. The Audit & Counter Fraud Team will report to the Audit Committee on a quarterly basis, providing details of the team's outputs, findings and performance against agreed indicators. In addition, the Audit & Counter Fraud Plan will be subject to a quarterly review to ensure that it continues to reflect the best use of the available resources. As such, it will be possible to revise the plan to add work on new/emerging risks and issues as they arise.

5. Risk management

- 5.1. The Public Sector Internal Audit Standards require that: The chief audit executive must establish risk-based plans to determine the priorities of the internal audit activity, consistent with the organisation's goals. The Audit & Counter Fraud Plan is intended to ensure that the work of the team is effectively directed and is in line with the organisation's goals. Member approval of the plan ensures its status is maintained.

6. Financial implications

- 6.1. An adequate and effective Audit & Counter Fraud function provides the council with assurance on the proper, economic, efficient and effective use of resources in delivery of services, as well as helping to identify fraud and error that could have an adverse effect on the financial statements of the council.

7. Legal implications

- 7.1. The Accounts & Audit Regulations 2015 require local authorities to: undertake an effective internal audit to evaluate the effectiveness of its risk management, control and governance processes, taking into account public sector internal auditing standards or guidance. The Section 151 Officer of a local authority is responsible for establishing the internal audit service. Gravesham Borough Council has delegated this responsibility to the Section 151 Officer of Medway Council to deliver internal audit services through the Shared Service to both authorities. The Public Sector Internal Audit Standards are supported by CIPFA's Local Government Application Note to the Public Sector Internal Audit Standards.

8. Recommendations

- 8.1. Members approve the Audit & Counter Fraud Plan for Medway for 2016-17 presented at Appendix A.

Lead officer contact

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Appendices

Appendix A – Audit & Counter Fraud Plan for Medway for 2016-17.

Background papers :

None