

Audit Committee

30th July 2020



Report of: Chief Internal Auditor

Title: Fraud Annual Report 2019/20

Ward: N/A

Officer Presenting Report: Simba Muzarurwi - Chief Internal Auditor

Recommendation

The Audit Committee note the Fraud Annual Report for 2019/20.

Summary

This Report provides the Committee with summary of the work undertaken by the Internal Audit – Counter Fraud team and the savings generated from counter fraud work in 2019/20.

Significant Matters Arising:

Key messages arising from this report at Appendix ;

- The target of 40 Council housing properties regained or other positive outcomes was achieved
- Counter fraud work within the Council has generated significant savings
- The team covers a wide range of Counter Fraud and investigative work within its current structure.
- Responsibility for Whistleblowing has transferred to the Internal Audit team
- The team continue to support the work on the distribution of grants to small businesses and therefore planned work for 2020/21 has been impacted.

1. Policy
Audit Committee Terms of Reference

2. Consultation

Internal – Statutory Policy Board including S151 Officer, Cabinet Member for Governance, Resources and Finance and Monitoring Officer.

External – N/A

3. Context

3.1 This is the Annual Report outlining the Counter fraud work that has taken place in Bristol City Council. The report is provided to:

- Give an overview of the work of the Internal Audit – Counter Fraud and Investigations team and other anti-fraud work which has taken place within the Council;
- Present details of the savings identified through counter fraud and investigation work.
- Demonstrate the variety of investigation work that the Counter Fraud team undertakes and the competing priorities.
- Update members on the transfer of responsibility for Whistleblowing to Internal Audit.
- Update Members on the actions resulting from an assessment of counter fraud arrangements against the 'Fighting Fraud and Corruption Locally' government strategy on Local government fraud.
- Give an outline of the work being undertaken in the team in response to Covid-19.

The full report can be found at Appendix A

4. Proposal

4.1 The Audit Committee note the work of the Counter Fraud and Investigations team during 2019/20.

5. Other Options Considered – N/A

6. Risk Assessment

The work of Internal Audit Counter Fraud team reduces the financial loss from fraud and increases the potential for prevention and detection of fraud.

Public Sector Equality Duties

- 7a) Before making a decision, section 149 Equality Act 2010 requires that each decision-maker considers the need to promote equality for persons with the following “protected characteristics”: age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation. Each decision-maker must, therefore, have due regard to the need to:
- i) Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited under the Equality Act 2010.
 - ii) Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not share it. This involves having due regard, in particular, to the need to --
 - remove or minimise disadvantage suffered by persons who share a relevant protected characteristic;
 - take steps to meet the needs of persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of people who do not share it (in relation to disabled people, this includes, in particular, steps to take account of disabled persons' disabilities);
 - encourage persons who share a protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.
 - iii) Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not share it. This involves having due regard, in particular, to the need to –
 - tackle prejudice; and
 - promote understanding.
- 7b) No Equality Impact anticipated from this report.

Legal and Resource Implications

Legal – N/A
Financial – N/A
Land – N/A
Personnel – N/A

Appendices:

Appendix A – Annual Counter Fraud Report 2019/20.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985

Background Papers:

None