

HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL Anti-Fraud and Corruption Strategy

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Huntingdonshire District Council is determined that a culture of honesty, openness and accountability will always be promoted, and as such is wholly opposed to all forms of fraud, corruption or theft. The Council is committed to making sure that the risk of fraud, corruption and theft is reduced to a level that is proportionate to the resources required to achieve that reduction. The Council also recognises that all dishonest acts undermine the high standards of public service that it is aiming to achieve.
- 1.2 This Anti-Fraud and Corruption Strategy provides details of our approach to tackling fraud, corruption and theft. It gathers together, under the heading of one overall document, all of the Authority's policies and guidance that deal with this area.

2. Anti-Fraud and Corruption Statement

- 2.1 The Council is committed to the highest possible standards of honesty, openness and accountability. The Council will not tolerate any fraud, corruption or theft by Members, employees, consultants, contractors or service users. It will ensure that internal procedures are in place to deter and prevent the risk of fraud, corruption or theft, maintain clear and well publicised arrangements for receiving and investigating complaints and pursue prosecution where instances of fraud, corruption and theft are found.

3 The Principles of Conduct

- 3.1 Each individual Member and employee is responsible for playing a part in ensuring that public confidence in the services provided by the Council is maintained. They will lead by example in ensuring compliance with all legal requirements, rules, procedures and practices, and conduct themselves in accordance with both the spirit and letter of their respective Codes of Conduct.

4. Reducing the risk of fraud, corruption and theft

- 4.1 The Council has a number of procedures and rules to make sure that financial, administrative and organisational procedures are properly controlled. The most important of these procedures and rules are the:
- Code of Financial Management
 - Code of Procurement
 - Code of Conduct for Members
 - Code of Conduct for Employees
- 4.2 The Code of Financial Management makes clear that it is the responsibility of each Director and Head of Service to ensure that the services they manage are well controlled and that suitable levels of internal check are included in all working procedures, particularly financial procedures, to allow for the early detection of fraud, corruption and theft. All systems shall contain efficient, effective and well-documented controls.

5. Disclosure, investigation and prosecution policies

- 5.1 The Anti-Fraud and Corruption Strategy shall be supported by specific policies or procedures that deal with the issues of disclosure, investigation and prosecution. These policies and procedures are:

- The Whistle-blowing Policy
- The Whistle-blowing Procedure
- The Housing & Council Tax Benefit Anti-Fraud Strategy
- The Housing & Council Tax Benefit Prosecution Policy
- The Disciplinary Procedures

In addition to the above, detailed guidance notes have been written to assist staff who are required to undertake specific investigations.

5.2 The policies and procedures aim to ensure that the Council's commitment to the prevention of fraud, corruption and theft:

- is clearly defined
- actively encourages and promotes the prevention and detection of fraud, corruption and theft
- identifies clear reporting lines for those having knowledge or suspicion of irregularity
- establishes uniform procedures for handling allegations, ensuring consistent treatment
- ensures fair treatment for those against whom allegations are made
- encourages individuals and organisations who come into contact with the Council in the course of their business to recognise the Council's Anti-Fraud and Corruption Strategy.

5.3 Irrespective of who is involved, all matters of significant fraud and corruption identified, where its investigation is not covered by another policy or procedure, will be referred to the Police.

6. **Publicising the Strategy**

6.1 The Council will make suitable arrangements to publicise the Anti-Fraud and Corruption Strategy and supporting policies to all Members and employees.

6.2 Action will be taken to make the public and members of outside bodies aware of the Council's Anti-Fraud and Corruption Strategy.

6.3 Members and employees can obtain copies of the Codes and policies noted in this strategy from the Head of Personnel Services, the Head of Revenue Services or the Audit Manager. They are also available on the Intranet.

7. **Conclusion**

7.1 The Council is committed to tackling fraud, corruption and theft whenever it happens and any allegations received will be responded to in an effective and organised manner, following the principles and procedures within this document.

7.2 The S151 Officer and the Monitoring Officer will jointly review the Anti-Fraud and Corruption Strategy on an annual basis to ensure it remains effective. The outcome of the review will be reported to the Standards Committee who shall recommend to Cabinet any changes to the Strategy.