

SLOUGH BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Audit & Corporate Governance Committee **DATE:** 24th September 2015

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WARD(S): All

PART I **FOR INFORMATION**

REVIEW OF WHISTLEBLOWING AND ANTI-FRAUD POLICIES

1. **Purpose of Report**

To inform the Committee that the Whistleblowing and Anti-Fraud Policies are being reviewed following an audit of the Corporate Fraud Team by Baker Tilly.

2. **Recommendation**

To note the action being taken in relation to the Whistleblowing and Anti-Fraud Policies.

3. **The Slough Joint Wellbeing Strategy, the JSNA and the Five Year Plan**

3a. **Slough Joint Wellbeing Strategy Priorities**

Having good governance arrangements in relation to Whistleblowing and Anti-Fraud helps to underpin all of the Council's priorities.

3b. **Five Year Plan Outcomes**

These Policies will assist in making Slough one of the safest places in the Thames Valley as they will set out the expectations in relation to the behaviour of Officers and Members in relation to whistleblowing and anti-fraud measures.

4. **Other Implications**

(a) **Financial**

There are no financial implications of the proposed action.

(b) **Risk Management**

There are no risk management implications associated with the noting of the recommendation. However, if steps are not taken to put these Policies, then there is a risk of there being a higher incidence of cases of fraud within the organisation which may not be able to be dealt with as efficiently.

(c) **Human Rights Act and Other Legal Implications**

There are no human rights implications

(d) Equalities Impact Assessment

The provisions apply to all members and all staff regardless of race, gender, disability, age, religion or sexual orientation.

5. **Supporting Information**

An audit of the Corporate Fraud Team took place in 2014/15. On 2nd June Baker Tilly published their report. It contained a number of recommendations aimed at improving policy, procedure and the efficiency of the Corporate Fraud Team. The following recommendations relate to policy:

- Review and update the Anti Fraud Strategy
- Undertake a policy review of all key policies
- Review the Anti Bribery Policy
- Implement an Anti Money Laundering Policy
- All policies to support and reference 'whistleblowing' arrangements.

On 4th September 2015, the National Crime Agency issues an 'amber alert' to all Local Authorities, to review existing Anti Bribery Policies due to the threat posed by organised crime. The alert supports the review recommended by Baker Tilly.

The process has begun to draft/review these Policies and it was considered appropriate to draw this to the attention of this Committee. Once this exercise has been completed they will be brought to a future meeting of the Committee for consideration/comments.

6. **Conclusion**

At this stage it is only necessary for the Committee to note what is being done. Further action will be required once the exercise has been completed.

7. **Background Papers**

None