WELWYN HATFIELD BOROUGH COUNCIL
STANDARDS COMMITEE 30 NOVEMBER 2020
REPORT OF THE CORPORATE DIRECTOR (RESOURCES, ENVIRONMENT AND CULTURAL SERVICES)

Part I

REVIEW OF CORPORATE ANTI-FRAUD AND CORRUPTION POLICY AND ASSOCIATED POLICIES

1   Executive Summary

1.1   The council' s current anti-fraud and corruption policies and framework are due for renewal. To ensure consistency and coherent framework these policies have all been reviewed together. These policies are:

- Anti-fraud and corruption
- Anti-bribery
- Anti-money Laundering
- Preventing Tax Evasion

1.2   As the reviews were more fundamental in approach, policies have not been presented with tracked changes. Current policies can be found on the council's website for reference:

https://www.welhat.gov.uk/policies

2   Recommendation(s)

2.1   That Standards Committee approve the suite of proposed policies.

3   Explanation

3.1   The council's current anti-fraud and corruption policies are out of date and due a review. The Herts Shared Internal Fraud Service was commissioned to undertake a review of these policies and provide guidance on requirements.

3.2   The policies have been updated to be more streamlined and coherent, improving consistency in approach between policies. An example o this is the use of a single email account for reporting the different areas of fraud and corruption.

3.3   These polices reflect the latest guidance and best practice including two publications issued in early 2020. (Fighting Fraud and Corruption Locally Strategy 2020 *(CIFAS)* and A Guide to Understanding to Total Impact of Fraud 2020 *(International Public Sector Fraud Forum)*).

3.4   In particular, the CIFAS strategy seeks to improve the ways in which councils can come together to tackle fraud, and the proposed policies provide the scope and framework to do so.

3.5 These policies were presented to Audit Committee on 28 September 2020 for opportunity to comment and feed into the proposed polices.

Implications

4 Legal Implication(s)

4.1 There is a suite of legislation that the council must comply with in relation to fraud and corruption. The relevant legislation is listed on the front page of each of the policies.

5 Financial Implication(s)

5.1 There are no direct impactions arising from the implementation of these policies. However, the policies provide a continued framework for the council to tackle fraud and corruption to prevent financial losses or recover losses where a fraud is identified.

6 Risk Management Implications

6.1 Failure to have robust policies and processes in place for the prevention and management of fraud and corruption could expose the council to significant financial losses and reputational damage.

7 Security and Terrorism Implication(s)

7.1 In some instances, money laundering, fraud and corruption can be linked to wider criminal and terrorist activity. Having these policies help reduce exposure for the council being linked to such activities.

8 Procurement Implication(s)

Not applicable

9 Climate Change Implication(s)

9.1 Not applicable

10 Human Resources Implication(s)

Not applicable

11 Health and Wellbeing Implication(s)

11.1 Not applicable

12 Communication and Engagement Implication(s)

12.1 The communication and training plan on the policies will be developed for members and employees after the policies are approved.

13 Link to Corporate Priorities

13.1 The subject of this report is linked to the Council's Corporate Priority "Our Council".

14 Equality and Diversity

14.1 An EqIA was completed on 17 September 2020 and no negative impact was identified on any of the protected groups under equalities legislation.

Name of author   Richard Baker
Title   Head of Resources
Date   18 November 2020

<u>Appendices</u>

Appendix A - Anti-fraud and corruption
Appendix B - Anti-bribery
Appendix C - Anti-money Laundering
Appendix D - Preventing Tax Evasion