

BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT TO CABINET

8 MARCH 2022

REPORT OF THE CHIEF OFFICER - FINANCE, PERFORMANCE AND CHANGE

FRAUD STRATEGY AND FRAMEWORK 2022/23 to 2024/25

1. Purpose of report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to present to Cabinet for approval the Fraud Strategy and Framework 2022/23 to 2024/25 and to note the current Fraud Risk Register.

2. Connection to corporate well-being objectives / other corporate priorities

- 2.1 This report assists in the achievement of the following corporate well-being objective under the **Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015**:-
- **Smarter use of resources** – ensure that all resources (financial, physical, ecological, human and technological) are used as effectively and efficiently as possible and support the creation of resources throughout the community that can help to deliver the Council's well-being objectives.

3. Background

- 3.1 The Council previously had a 3year Fraud Strategy and Framework covering the period 2018/19 to 2020/21, which required reviewing and updating.
- 3.2 In July 2020 Audit Wales produced a report entitled 'Raising Our Game – Tackling Fraud in Wales'. The report identified seven key themes that all public bodies needed to focus on in raising their game to tackle fraud more effectively and made 15 recommendations across the themes.
- 3.3 In November 2020 a position statement against the National Study was completed and taken to the Governance and Audit Committee. One of the recommendations was that all public bodies should undertake comprehensive fraud risk assessments.
- 3.4 A draft Fraud Strategy and Framework 2022/23 to 2024/25 and a draft Fraud Risk Register were presented to the Governance and Audit Committee on 22 April 2021 for consideration, prior to submission to Cabinet for approval.

4. Current situation/proposal

- 4.1 The Strategy and Risk Register have been updated following consideration by the Governance and Audit Committee. The Fraud Strategy and Framework 2022/23 to 2024/25 (attached as **Appendix A**) outlines the aims and objectives of the Strategy, identifies fraud risks and includes the measures we will take as an organisation to further improve the Council's resilience to fraud, bribery and corruption. Finally, it

includes measures of success and a flow chart to demonstrate the Council's approach to a suspected fraud. Updates on fraud are reported to the Governance and Audit Committee on an annual basis via the Annual Corporate Fraud Report or ad hoc as necessary.

- 4.2 The Fraud Risk Register (attached as **Appendix B**) lists 20 potential fraud risks that have been identified throughout the Council. The Register outlines the consequences of each risk and how each risk is being addressed with key actions being identified. The Fraud Risk Register will be monitored by the Corporate Management Board on a quarterly basis and any significant risks identified will be escalated to the Corporate Risk Register and reported to the Governance and Audit Committee where necessary.

5. Effect upon policy framework and procedure rules

- 5.1 There is no effect upon the policy framework and procedure rules.

6. Equality Act 2010 implications

- 6.1 The protected characteristics identified within the Equality Act, Socio-economic Duty and the impact on the use of the Welsh Language have been considered in the preparation of this report. As a public body in Wales the Council must consider the impact of strategic decisions, such as the development or the review of policies, strategies, services and functions. It is considered that there will be no significant or unacceptable equality impacts as a result of this report.

7. Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 implications

- 7.1 The well-being goals identified in the Act were considered in the preparation of this report. It is considered that there will be no significant or unacceptable impacts upon the achievement of well-being goals/objectives as a result of this report.

8. Financial implications

- 8.1 The financial implications are reflected within the report and appendices as any fraud impacts on the resources available to the Council.

9. Recommendation

- 9.1 Cabinet is recommended to approve the Fraud Strategy and Framework 2022/23 to 2024/25 and note the latest Fraud Risk Register.

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Background documents: None