

Meeting of:	CABINET
Date of Meeting:	22 JULY 2025
Report Title:	ANTI-FRAUD, BRIBERY AND CORRUPTION POLICY
Report Owner / Corporate Director:	CHIEF OFFICER – FINANCE, HOUSING AND CHANGE
Responsible Officer:	NIGEL SMITH, GROUP MANAGER – CHIEF ACCOUNTANT
Policy Framework and Procedure Rules:	Regulation 26.2 of the Financial Procedure Rules requires the Chief Finance Officer to develop, maintain and implement the Anti-Fraud, Bribery and Corruption Policy. The Policy should be reviewed on a regular basis.
Executive Summary:	The Anti-Fraud, Bribery & Corruption Policy was last updated in January 2019 and approved by Cabinet on 19 February 2019. The policy should be regularly reviewed and updated and, as such, was reviewed by the Governance and Audit Committee on 19 June 2025. A few changes were requested, which have been incorporated into the updated Policy, and it is now presented to Cabinet for approval.

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to present the updated Anti-Fraud, Bribery and Corruption Policy (**Appendix A**) to Cabinet for approval.

2. Background

- 2.1 The Anti-Fraud, Bribery and Corruption Policy should be reviewed regularly to ensure that it is kept up to date. The last update was in February 2019. The revised Policy was reviewed by the Governance and Audit Committee on 19 June 2025, and was endorsed subject to a few additional changes.
- 2.2 The council in carrying out its functions and responsibilities encourages a culture of openness and fairness and expects Elected Members and employees at all levels to adopt the highest standards of propriety and accountability. The Anti-Fraud, Bribery and Corruption Policy recognises that the council as a large organisation is at risk of loss due to fraud, bribery and corruption from both within the Council and outside it. The Anti-fraud, Bribery and Corruption Policy seeks to:

- maintain and promote a **zero-tolerance** culture to fraud and corruption
- **safeguard public money** by reducing losses from fraud and corruption to an absolute minimum by taking practical, risk-informed steps and maintaining a strong deterrent
- encourage **prevention** and promote **detection** and effective investigation of suspected fraud or corruption and take robust action against those found to be committing any such acts
- place confidence in Bridgend County Borough Council and its work by ensuring we act and are seen to **act with integrity**

3. Current situation / proposal

- 3.1 The Council has in place policies on Anti-Fraud, Bribery and Corruption, Anti-tax evasion and Anti-Money Laundering. These provide effective arrangements to prevent and detect acts of Fraud, Bribery and Corruption along with Money Laundering which are monitored and reviewed by the Governance and Audit Committee.
- 3.2 The Anti-Fraud, Bribery and Corruption Policy specifically addresses the three areas of Fraud, Bribery and Corruption outlining the procedures to be followed should any such events occur or be suspected along with the actions that may be taken. Cabinet last approved the Anti-Fraud and Bribery Policy on 19 February 2019. The current review has made several minor amendments and updates, to include the element of corruption, reflect current legislation and to improve the content relating to actions that could be undertaken. The revised Anti-Fraud, Bribery and Corruption Policy is attached as **Appendix A**. The policy was reviewed by the Governance and Audit Committee on 19 June 2025 who requested a few amendments which have been now reflected in the version presented.
- 3.3 This policy is supplementary to the Council's wider Fraud Strategy and Framework which sets out the key responsibilities with regard to fraud prevention and what to do if fraud or financial irregularity is suspected and the action that will be taken by management.
- 3.4 The policy will be reviewed and updated every two years in line with the Governance and Audit Committee Forward Work Programme.

4. Equality implications (including Socio-economic Duty and Welsh Language)

- 4.1 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.

5. Well-being of Future Generations implications and connection to Corporate Well-being Objectives

5.1 The well-being goals identified in the Act were considered in the preparation of this report. The following is a summary to show how the 5 ways of working to achieve the well-being goals have been used to formulate the recommendations within this report:

- **Long Term** The Anti-Fraud, Bribery and Corruption Policy, Procedure and Reporting Arrangements will assist in the long term to support officers and Members in the successful execution of their duties by meeting the legal obligations during business activities.
- **Prevention** The purpose of the procedure is to prevent Fraud, Bribery and Corruption and to report it where it is suspected.
- **Integration** The outcomes that the procedure supports is that implementation of the policy will help in the prevention of Fraud, Bribery and Corruption.
- **Collaboration** All members and staff are obliged to follow this policy.
- **Involvement** The persons mainly involved in the procedure will be Bridgend County Borough Council staff.

6. Climate Change and Nature Implications

6.1 The climate change and nature implications were considered in the preparation of this report. It is considered that there will be no significant or unacceptable impacts upon the environment because of this report.

7. Safeguarding and Corporate Parent Implications

7.1 The Safeguarding and Corporate Parenting implications were considered in the preparation of this report. It is considered that there will be no significant or unacceptable impacts upon Safeguarding and Corporate parenting because of this report.

8. Financial Implications

8.1 There are no financial implications arising from this report.

9. Recommendation

9.1 It is recommended that Cabinet approves the updated Anti-Fraud, Bribery and Corruption Policy at **Appendix A**.

Background documents

None