

This report is public.	
Counter Fraud Work Programme 2024/25	
Committee	Accounts, Audit and Risk Committee
Date of Committee	17 July 2024
Portfolio Holder presenting the report	Deputy Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Finance and Resources, Councillor Lesley McLean.
Date Portfolio Holder agreed report	2 July 2024
Report of	Assistant Director of Finance (Section 151 Officer), Michael Furness

Purpose of report

This report presents the programme of counter work to be undertaken in 2024/25, and asks the Accounts, Audit and Risk Committee note this programme.

1. Recommendations

The Accounts, Audit and Risk Committee is recommended to:

- 1.1 Note and approve the 2024/25 counter fraud work programme.

2. Executive Summary

- 2.1 The council's counter fraud service is to be delivered by Veritau. Two hundred days have been allocated for counter fraud work in 2024/25.
- 2.2 A counter fraud work programme for 2024/25 (contained in appendix 1) should be noted and approved by this committee as part of its responsibility for overseeing the work of the counter fraud team.

Implications & Impact Assessments

Implications	Commentary
Finance	The are no financial implications arising directly from this report. Rachel Ainsworth (FBP for Resources) 03/07/24
Legal	The are no legal implications arising directly from this report. It is important to be continuously vigilant to fraud and the work proposed is both reactive and proactive and includes learning from investigations to protect us better in the future. Alison Coles, Legal Services Operations Manager, Solicitor, 3 July 2024

Risk Management	There are no risk management issues arising directly from this report, establish a counter fraud work programme for 2024/25 mitigates the risk of being unable to detect, deter, and prevent fraud against the council. Celia Prado-Teeling, Performance Team Leader, 04 July 2024			
Impact Assessments	Positive	Neutral	Negative	Commentary
Equality Impact		X		N/A – this report is for information
A Are there any aspects of the proposed decision, including how it is delivered or accessed, that could impact on inequality?		X		N/A
B Will the proposed decision have an impact upon the lives of people with protected characteristics, including employees and service users?		X		N/A
Climate & Environmental Impact		X		N/A
ICT & Digital Impact			X	The counter fraud team provides additional training and awareness for employees on cybercrime and cybersecurity issues which helps protect the council. Jonathan Dodsworth, Assistant Director – Corporate Fraud, 3 July 2024
Data Impact			X	The counter fraud team will ensure that the council meets statutory guidance relating to the provision of data to the Public Sector Fraud Authority’s National Fraud Initiative. Jonathan Dodsworth, Assistant Director – Corporate Fraud, 3 July 2024
Procurement & subsidy		X		N/A
Council Priorities	This report supports the priorities set out in the 2024/25 business plan. The counter fraud team seeks to protect council income and assets so they can help fund the objectives of the business plan. The team also supports the council’s specific goal to reduce crime which forms part of its overall goal to promote healthy, resilient, and engaged communities.			
Human Resources	N/A			

Property	N/A
Consultation & Engagement	The council's Assistant Director of Finance and Section 151 Officer and other senior officers have been consulted in the commission of counter fraud services. Through presentation of this report, members of the Accounts, Audit and Risk Committee are also being consulted.

Supporting Information

3. Background

- 3.1 With effect from 1 May 2024, Cherwell District Council's counter fraud service has been provided by Veritau. Veritau has been engaged on an initial six-month contract to develop the council's counter fraud strategy and to begin delivery of counter fraud work until longer term service provision is secured. While formal approval of the counter fraud programme is not required, the proposed areas of work are set out in this report for the committee's information.

4. Details

- 4.1 The counter fraud programme in appendix 1 outlines areas of work for the counter fraud team in 2024/25. The amount of time spent in each area will depend on the amounts and types of fraud referred to the team, however the programme contains an indicative split of how the time will be used. Total planned counter fraud days for 2024/25 are 200.

5. Alternative Options and Reasons for Rejection

- 5.1 The nature of this report is such that alternative options are not appropriate.

6 Conclusion and Reasons for Recommendations

- 6.1 The Accounts, Audit and Risk Committee is recommended to note and approve the counter fraud work programme for 2024/25. This is so that it can fulfil its responsibility for overseeing the work of the counter fraud team. This responsibility is defined in the committee's terms of reference. Approval of the work programme at this meeting will allow the counter fraud team to help detect, deter, and prevent fraud against the council.

Decision Information

Key Decision	N/A
Subject to Call in	N/A
If not, why not subject to call in	N/A
Ward(s) Affected	All

Document Information

Appendices	
Appendix 1	Counter Fraud Work Programme 2024/25
Background Papers	None
Reference Papers	None
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