

REPORT TO: Business Efficiency Board

DATE: 25 February 2015

REPORTING OFFICER: Operational Director – Finance

SUBJECT: Protecting the Public Purse – Fraud Briefing

PORTFOLIO: Resources

WARD(S): Borough-wide

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of this item is to brief Members on comparative information on council fraud detection levels based on the Audit Commission's annual detected fraud and corruption survey from 2013/14. Submission of the survey is a mandatory requirement under Section 48 of the Audit Commission Act 1998.
- 1.2 Grant Thornton, as the Council's external auditor, provided confirmation that the submissions made fairly reflected their knowledge of the Council's fraud detection activities.
- 1.3 The report highlights national fraud risks and asks Members to consider if the Council's remaining counter-fraud resources and skill sets are adequate after its benefit fraud investigators have left to join the Single Fraud Investigation Service.
- 1.4 Grant Thornton will be attending the meeting to present their report.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION: That the Board notes the report and considers the issues raised by Grant Thornton.

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 3.1 Please see attached report.

4.0 POLICY, FINANCIAL AND OTHER IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 This briefing report summarises the Council's performance in tackling a range of fraud types and provides an opportunity for Members to consider fraud detection performance compared to other unitary local authorities.

5.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES

- 5.1 Effective arrangements to prevent and detect fraud and corruption help to safeguard public money and therefore contribute to the achievement of all the Council's priorities.

6.0 RISK ANALYSIS

- 6.1 There are no risks directly associated with this report. However, the report highlights the potential fraud risks to which a local authority is likely to be exposed.

7.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

- 7.1 None identified.

8.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

- 8.1 None under the meaning of the Act.