

**GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE**

**18<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER 2014**

**REPORT OF HEAD OF CENTRAL SERVICES**

**AUDIT COMMISSION FRAUD CHECKLIST**

**1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 To update the committee on the completed document “Questions for councillors to support 2013 individual fraud briefings” which was circulated by the External Auditor at the meeting held on 22<sup>nd</sup> September 2014 in support of the Protecting the Public Purse Briefing that was held.

**2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 2.1 **That the report be noted.**

**3.0 KEY ISSUES**

- 3.1 At the meeting held on 22<sup>nd</sup> September 2014 the External Auditor presented an Audit Commission presentation regarding fraud which has been based on the returns that every local authority is asked to prepare every year entitled “Protecting the Public Purse”. This led to a good debate regarding fraud generally and the various measures in place within the council. The auditor also circulated a questionnaire to councillors and it was requested that the Head of Central services coordinate a response to these and bring them back for consideration at this meeting.
- 3.2 Relevant service areas were asked to feed into the response to the questions and these were then considered by the Council’s Management Team. Following this exercise a copy of the completed responses is attached as Appendix A.
- 3.3 From the responses it can be seen that for a small council Melton manages its resources very well with regard to fraud prevention and detection. Leicester City Council has submitted a fraud bid which would enable it to work with the district councils in Leicestershire to support more work on fraud, not just in the areas of prevention and detection, but also investigation work following suspected fraud being identified. This would strengthen the limited resources the council currently has at its disposal and provide the skills and expertise in the area of investigation and potentially prosecution which are currently very constrained within the council. The outcome of this bid is awaited.
- 3.4 Following the previous Governance committee meeting further training and awareness sessions for all staff have been commissioned from internal audit which is aimed to be delivered in the early part of 2015. An on line training tool is already in existence and this is mandatory training for all new staff.

**4.0 POLICY AND CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 The council has a corporate counter fraud strategy. This covers theft, fraud and

corruption. In addition the Council also has a Benefit Fraud Security Strategy which is specifically aimed at Benefit fraud.

**5.0 FINANCIAL AND OTHER RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

5.1 There are no financial or other resource implications arising as a result of this report. The council currently employs 1 FTE dedicated to benefit fraud. Other aspects of fraud are covered by core resources with some corporate proactive work being undertaken as part of the annual audit plan. Data matching exercises when undertaken are funded from existing budgets.

5.2 The work that would be undertaken in partnership with Leicester City Council would be at no cost to this council.

**6.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS/POWERS**

6.1 There are no legal implications arising as a result of this report.

**7.0 COMMUNITY SAFETY**

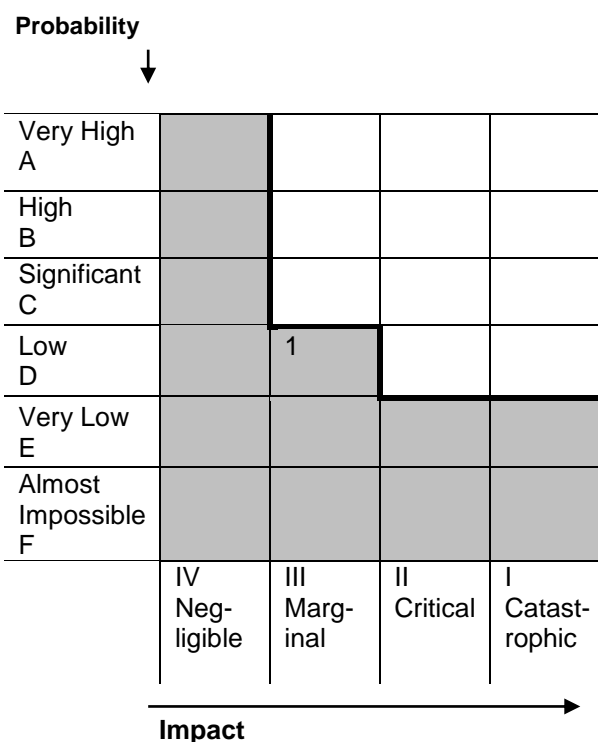
7.1 There are no particular community safety implications arising from this report.

**8.0 EQUALITIES**

8.1 There are no particular equalities issues arising as a result of this report.

**9.0 RISKS**

9.1 The Central Services Service Plan sets out the risk of fraud or corruption occurring on a corporate basis.



Risk No.	Description
1	Fraud or corruption Occurs

**10.0 CLIMATE CHANGE**

10.1 There are no particular climate change implications arising from this report.

**11.0 CONSULTATION**

11.1 Management Team and relevant officers have been involved and consulted on the completion of the checklist.

**12.0 WARDS AFFECTED**

12.1 All

Contact Officer      Dawn Garton  
Date:

Appendices :          Appendix A – Completed fraud checklist  
Background Papers:

Reference :            X:\Cttee, Council & Sub Cttees\Governance\201415\18/11/14