

Thurrock - An ambitious and collaborative community which is proud of its heritage and excited by its diverse opportunities and future

## Standards and Audit Committee

The meeting will be held at **7.00 pm** on **25 November 2021**

**South Essex College, High Street, Grays, RM17 6TF – Room W1.23**

### Membership:

Councillors Cathy Kent (Chair), Graham Snell (Vice-Chair), Adam Carter, Gary Collins, Augustine Ononaji and Kairen Raper

Charles Clarke, Co-Optee Member

Lisa Laybourn, Co-Optee Member

### Substitutes:

Councillors John Kent, Shane Ralph, Sue Sammons and David Van Day

### Agenda

Open to Public and Press

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To approve as a correct record the minutes of the Standards and Audit Committee meeting held on 9 September 2021.	
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To receive additional items that the Chair is of the opinion should be considered as a matter of urgency, in accordance with Section 100B (4) (b) of the Local Government Act 1972.	
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**Queries regarding this Agenda or notification of apologies:**

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Agenda published on: **17 November 2021**

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# DECLARING INTERESTS FLOWCHART – QUESTIONS TO ASK YOURSELF

Breaching those parts identified as a pecuniary interest is potentially a criminal offence

## Helpful Reminders for Members

- *Is your register of interests up to date?*
- *In particular have you declared to the Monitoring Officer all disclosable pecuniary interests?*
- *Have you checked the register to ensure that they have been recorded correctly?*

## When should you declare an interest *at a meeting*?

- **What matters are being discussed at the meeting?** (including Council, Cabinet, Committees, Subs, Joint Committees and Joint Subs); or
- If you are a Cabinet Member making decisions other than in Cabinet **what matter is before you for single member decision?**



Does the business to be transacted at the meeting

- relate to; or
- likely to affect

any of your registered interests and in particular any of your Disclosable Pecuniary Interests?

Disclosable Pecuniary Interests shall include your interests or those of:

- your spouse or civil partner's
- a person you are living with as husband/ wife
- a person you are living with as if you were civil partners

where you are aware that this other person has the interest.

A detailed description of a disclosable pecuniary interest is included in the Members Code of Conduct at Chapter 7 of the Constitution. **Please seek advice from the Monitoring Officer about disclosable pecuniary interests.**

**What is a Non-Pecuniary interest?** – this is an interest which is not pecuniary (as defined) but is nonetheless so significant that a member of the public with knowledge of the relevant facts, would reasonably regard to be so significant that it would materially impact upon your judgement of the public interest.

### **Pecuniary**

If the interest is not already in the register you must (unless the interest has been agreed by the Monitoring Officer to be sensitive) disclose the existence and nature of the interest to the meeting

If the Interest is not entered in the register and is not the subject of a pending notification you must within 28 days notify the Monitoring Officer of the interest for inclusion in the register

**Unless you have received dispensation upon previous application from the Monitoring Officer, you must:**

- **Not participate or participate further in any discussion of the matter at a meeting;**
- **Not participate in any vote or further vote taken at the meeting; and**
- **leave the room while the item is being considered/voted upon**

**If you are a Cabinet Member you may make arrangements for the matter to be dealt with by a third person but take no further steps**

### **Non- pecuniary**

Declare the nature and extent of your interest including enough detail to allow a member of the public to understand its nature



**You may participate and vote in the usual way but you should seek advice on Predetermination and Bias from the Monitoring Officer.**

## Our Vision and Priorities for Thurrock

An ambitious and collaborative community which is proud of its heritage and excited by its diverse opportunities and future.

1. **People** – a borough where people of all ages are proud to work and play, live and stay
  - High quality, consistent and accessible public services which are right first time
  - Build on our partnerships with statutory, community, voluntary and faith groups to work together to improve health and wellbeing
  - Communities are empowered to make choices and be safer and stronger together
  
2. **Place** – a heritage-rich borough which is ambitious for its future
  - Roads, houses and public spaces that connect people and places
  - Clean environments that everyone has reason to take pride in
  - Fewer public buildings with better services
  
3. **Prosperity** – a borough which enables everyone to achieve their aspirations
  - Attractive opportunities for businesses and investors to enhance the local economy
  - Vocational and academic education, skills and job opportunities for all
  - Commercial, entrepreneurial and connected public services

## Minutes of the Meeting of the Standards and Audit Committee held on 9 September 2021 at 7.00 pm

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**Present:** Councillors Cathy Kent (Chair), Graham Snell (Vice-Chair), Adam Carter, Gary Collins, Augustine Ononaji and Kairen Raper

Lisa Laybourn, Co-opted Member

**In attendance:** Sean Clark, Corporate Director Resources and Place Delivery  
Rachel Brittain, BDO LLP  
Gary Clifford, Chief Internal Auditor  
Lee Henley, Strategic Lead, Information Management  
David Kleinberg, Assistant Director for Counter Fraud & Investigations  
Jonathon Wilson, Assistant Director, Finance  
Jenny Shade, Senior Democratic Services Officer

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Before the start of the Meeting, all present were advised that the meeting was being live streamed to the Council's website channel.

### 9. Minutes

The minutes of the Standard and Audit Committee held on the 8 July 2021 were approved as a correct record.

### 10. Items of Urgent Business

There were no items of urgent business.

### 11. Declaration of Interests

There were no interests declared.

### 12. External Audit - Verbal Update

Rachel Brittain from BDO, the Council's external auditors, provided an update to Members on the challenges currently being experienced in the external audit market and things that need to happen to change these. That only 45% of audit opinions were signed by the extended deadline of the 30 November 2020 which meant that both BDO and the wider public sector audit market still had 55% of the work to do. The government deadline had been extended to the 30 November had meant that work that would normally be undertaken by the end of July when financial statements would normally be signed off had been pushed back to January and March 2021. There were now a percentage of the 2018/19 audits that were still outstanding and there was still a percentage of the 2019/20 audit still outstanding. Therefore we have work that

we should be doing in January to March to complete now and have a deadline for audit opinions to be signed by the 30 September. With all those things put together means we have more than a years' worth of work to be in less than nine months and alongside challenges regarding recruitment and retention in the external audit market. We have found ourselves in a position where we will not be able to sign the Council's audit opinion by the 30 September. It will not just be Thurrock Council that will be in this position but the position across a number of authorities. My aim to sign the opinion by the 30 November 2021 which would give the full audit cycle to fit everything in. This will of course be dependent on a number of factors with all the processes and audit procedures going smoothly. An objection to the financial statements had also been received and I will need to fulfil my responsibilities in that regard. The majority of the work that will need to be completed in response to that objection would be covered by the normal audit procedures. Rachel Brittain concluded by stating the auditors would be very much focusing on delivering for that date and will update officers and the committee of anything that comes up that would mean the unlikelihood of that being achieved.

### **13. Annual Complaints & Enquiries Report - 2020/2021**

Lee Henley presented the report that set out the number of complaints received for the reporting period was 1227 and that in comparison with the same period last year the figure was 1393, therefore the reporting period represented a reduction in complaints received. Members were referred to the details of the top 10 complaint areas, a summary for Adult Social Care complaints and a summary for Children Social Care complaints. That during the reporting period, 33% of complaints had been upheld which had been an improvement compared with the same period last year which had identified 40% of complaints as being upheld, 88% of complaints had been responded to within timeframe, a total of 374 MP enquiries had been received, of which 84% were responded to within the timeframe, a total of 3948 member enquiries had been received, with 95% responded to within timeframe, the average time taken to respond to members enquiries across all directorates was four days, the Council had received 1545 external compliments within the reporting period compared to 989 during last year.

Councillor Collins referred to the Ombudsman Enquiries in the report and asked for information on Maladministration which had been reported as an Ombudsman Finding. Lee Henley stated there would be a section on ombudsman decisions every year as part of the annual compliance report that varied across a whole range of service areas and there would always be cases that go to the ombudsman and key is that the Council learnt from those ombudsman findings and to consider offering alternative remedies as part of the complaints process. Councillor Collins asked what maladministration meant to which Lee Henley confirmed as an injustice, where a kind of incorrect or inefficient action had been undertaken by the Council. Councillor Collins questioned whether this could be caused by a lack of supervision to which Lee Henley stated it could be, it could be a lack of communication from the Council, a wrong decision made on a particular case and reiterated it



could be a range of things and referred Members to Appendix 1 of the report that identified the high level learnings identified from those complaints.

Councillor Raper referred to the training in place for external companies and questioned how the training content was implemented and embedded in practice and how were the outcomes measured to which Lee Henley stated this would be undertaken by the service areas. In context the report had identified a reduction in complaints which was positive, the percentage of complaints upheld had come down so another positive and learning would be taken from those upheld complaints as part of the learning action plans to ensure we do not receive repeated complaints.

Councillor Ononaji questioned that during the reporting period why had the target of 38% of complaints upheld not been met to which Lee Henley stated the target had been met and had exceeded the target. That the lower the figure the better with the target being 38% but 33% of complaints had actually been upheld which was a real positive.

Councillor Ononaji stated the associated costs of Stage 1 complaints was high and questioned whether this was due to maladministration to which Lee Henley stated this figure had been based on all complaints during that reporting period and the costs of processing those complaints.

Councillor Snell stated it was good to see that the number of complaints had reduced but questioned whether specific training that had been identified from those cases of maladministration be undertaken on an individual basis or as a department to which Lee Henley stated this would depend on the nature of the learning but would be a combination of both with the training itself being delivered within the service area.

Councillor Carter questioned whether there was a process to measure how many complaints were repeated complaints and what percentage that would be to which Lee Henley stated that complaints were analysed, logged and tracked. There may be a few complaints about similar themes but not exactly the same complaints and that steps would be taken to prevent any further complaints of that nature. Councillor Carter questioned whether those complaints that had been dealt with had come back to which Lee Henley stated that if a complaint had not been dealt with it would be escalated as part of the compliance process. Councillor Carter requested that more details of those types of complaints be presented in future reports.

Councillor C Kent thanked Lee Henley for the report.

## **RESOLVED**

**That the Standard and Audit Committee noted the statistics and performance for the reporting period.**

### **14. Counter Fraud & Investigation Quarterly Update (Q1)**

David Kleinberg presented the report that outlined the performance of the Counter Fraud & Investigation team over the last quarter for Thurrock Council as well as the work the team had delivered nationally for other public bodies.

Councillor Collins congratulated officers on the success of the team and referred to the benefits of the installation of the analytics tool at the applications stage of the grant schemes and questioned whether this had now been stopped or was still ongoing. David Kleinberg stated this had now been stopped with a very successful pilot undertaken and would now be extended over other Council services.

Councillor Collins requested further information on the Fraud Control Strategy particularly in regard to local government to which David Kleinberg stated this had been implemented after the Government National UK anti-corruption strategy where all councils were engaged by the home office to look at their intelligence that insider threats could target councils. Making sure that the council had controls and mechanisms in place to identify any threats but reassured Members that Thurrock had a tough system in place to prevent this from happening.

Councillor Snell echoed the successes of the team and questioned how much of the detected fraud would be recovered to which David Kleinberg stated this varied year on year but would require a defendant that had realisable assets and it was extremely difficult if a defendant had spent all the money and had no assets left. With the Council recovering about £6 million in the past 4-5 years. Councillor Snell questioned that for those where it was impossible to recover would face a prison sentence to which David Kleinberg stated this would be referred to the litigation team in legal services that would conduct the prosecution process.

Councillor Ononaji referred to the 57 reports of suspected fraud that had been received and questioned whether these were internal or external frauds to which David Kleinberg stated he did not have those figures to hand but would include those statistics in the next committee report.

Councillor C Kent thanked David Kleinberg for the report and thanked the team for all the work undertaken.

## **RESOLVED**

**That Standard and Audit Committee commented on the performance of the Counter Fraud & Investigation Department.**

### **15. Internal Audit Charter 2021**

Gary Clifford presented the Internal Audit Charter which was a formal document that defined the Internal Audit Services' purpose, authority and responsibility. The Internal Audit Charter established Internal Audit's position within the Council, including the nature of the Head of Internal Audit's functional reporting relationship with the Standards & Audit Committee,

authorised access to records, personnel and physical properties relevant to the performance of engagements and defined the scope of internal audit activities. The final approval of the Internal Audit Charter lays with the Standards & Audit Committee.

Councillor Collins thanked Gary Clifford for the detailed report and questioned the concerns made at the last committee about staff numbers within the audit team and whether the team were now at full complement to which Gary Clifford stated he was in the process of putting together a business case for new staff as another member of his team was leaving which would make the team smaller. Councillor Collins questioned whether there were difficulties in filling those posts to which Gary Clifford stated the Council currently had restrictions in place on recruitment and that the business case would make a case for those new members of staff and was being worked on urgently.

Councillor C Kent questioned with the team not being at full complement, was the team able to fulfil the programme of audits that had already been planned. Members were referred to the six month rolling plan that Council moved to in March 2021. In terms of audits that needed to be undertaken, these would be fulfilled for that six month rolling plan. However, this may take longer than the six months and then audits would be undertaken on the basis of those deemed to be of the highest priority.

Councillor Ononaji referred to the objectives set out in the report and questioned whether there were any key performance indicators on how those objectives would be measured. Gary Clifford stated that those would be built into the annual report to which Councillor Ononaji requested that these be incorporated into reports in the future.

Councillor Snell referred to the complaints report and the maladministration findings that some of the processes that were not being followed by Council staff and enquired whether if these were part of an audit would they be picked up, and if so, how these would be recorded and what influence the audit team would have in preventing issues going forward. Gary Clifford stated that periodically, work was undertaken around the complaints process and looked at how Lee Henley's team processed complaints. In addition, complaints within service areas may also be looked at and relevant recommendations made. Councillor Snell questioned whether a failure of a member of staff not following a process would be picked up and whether Internal Audit would identify that failure as part of the process at a particular stage. Gary Clifford stated it should be picked up and reported in the internal reports as a failure around the controls.

Councillor C Kent thanked Gary Clifford for the report.

## **RESOLVED**

**That the Standards and Audit Committee approved the internal Audit Charter 2021 and the Chair of the Standards & Audit Committee signed the Charter on behalf of the Committee.**

## **16. In Quarter 2 Refresh of the Strategic/Corporate Risk and Opportunity Register**

Jonathan Wilson presented the report that provided independent assurance that the authority's risk management arrangements were adequate and effective. The register was presented on an annual basis and provided details of how the key risks and opportunities facing the authority were identified and managed. The report provided the Standards and Audit Committee with the key risks and opportunities identified by the review and the revised Strategic/Corporate Risk and Opportunity Register. That a number of the risks and opportunities or management response arrangements had been impacted by the pandemic situation and the effects on the items were reflected in the report.

Councillor Snell thanked Jonathan Wilson for the report and questioned when referring to the risk rating who decided where the black box would go to which Jonathan Wilson stated that would be undertaken in conjunction with the risk team and the service. An assessment would be undertaken with the risk team making the final judgement on it.

Lisa Laybourn referred to the Dashboard and questioned those boxes with a risk rating as being shown in a different colour further in report, for example the impact of COVID was forecast to be brought down to a 9 in March 2022 but was still shown as a red, and questioned whether the risk remained as a high priority even after it had been brought down. Jonathan Wilson stated that currently it was still showing as red and that the cause rating was determining what the colour it was with an aspiration that this would fall by the end of the year, but currently it remained red.

Lisa Laybourn stated that a number of risks remained with the same rating for a considerable amount of time and questioned how the Council determined what the risk appetite was, what was the acceptable level of risk and whether the actions put in place were adequate for those risks that were not coming down over time. Jonathan Wilson stated the risks were aligned to what he would expect them to be as they reflected some of the very difficult areas the Council had to deal with. Sean Clark stated this was the corporate risk register that highlighted and captured the larger and more complex risks and that each directorate would have a much wider operational risk register sitting behind this with risks that would be more manageable.

Councillor C Kent thanked Jonathan Wilson for the report.

### **RESOLVED**

- 1. That Standards and Audit Committee noted the items and details contained in the Dashboard.**

2. **That Standards and Audit Committee noted the 'In Focus' report, which highlighted the higher priority items identified by the review.**

## **17. A13 Widening Project**

Sean Clark stated that the Planning, Transportation and Regeneration Overview and Scrutiny Committee was the committee that were tasked to actually look at the major projects such as that in terms of their deliverability of their outputs and those sorts of aspects in terms of the delivery. Where the Standards and Audit Committee had the responsibility around governance, which was more around actions such as the risk management side of this report and the Stanford Le Hope Transport Project.

Sean Clark presented the report that focused on the latest progress in delivery of the scheme and the impact of any changes in the agreed programme.

Councillor C Kent questioned that working with a new team on this project had changed any of the ways of doing things in a better way in light of the experiences that had been experienced so far on this project. Sean Clark stated very much so with a lot of lessons learnt from this project now going forward on to other projects that were coming forward especially around regeneration and highways infrastructure. That a complete review was undertaken on how the Council undertook project management on these types of projects and recommendations had also been taken from that report.

Councillor C Kent thanked Sean Clark for the report.

### **RESOLVED**

**That the Standards and Audit Committee noted and commented on the report content.**

## **18. Stanford Le Hope Transport Project**

Sean Clark presented the report that focused on the latest progress in delivery of the scheme and any changes in the agreed programme.

Councillor Snell referred to paragraph 3.4 of the report that the tender documentation would be completed and issued today so assumed this would not be happening and questioned whether enough tenders had been received and if so would that documentation be produced shortly. Sean Clark stated that a number of bidders had come forward and would see how that evolved once it went to full tender.

Councillor C Kent thanked Sean Clark for the report.

### **RESOLVED**

**That the Standards and Audit Committee noted and commented on the report content.**

**19. Investment Briefing**

Sean Clark presented the report that set out the actual level of investments and borrowings as at 31 July 2021.

Councillor Collins thanked Sean Clark for all the hard work on this leading up to the pandemic and questioned whether as the investments in the renewable energy sector diminished were there any further plans to invest anywhere to make up the shortfall in the future. Sean Clark stated not at this time, it had been clearly publicised in reports, budget reports and other reports that the Council would not look to carry out any new investments and would not be looking to review any maturing investments. The reasons for that was what had happened over the last couple of years in terms of reporting and secondly the Government had changed its focus on local authority investments over the last 18 months. Sean Clark stated that money that the Council got back from investments would be used to repay debt. Members were referred to paragraph 2.5 of the report that set out the key financial information on the Council's investment performance and position as at 31 July 2021.

Lisa Laybourn asked officers whether they were still comfortable in the level of concentration into one sector, being renewable energy, and whether they were still comfortable with the liquidity of the CCLA. Sean Clark responded by stating he was happy that the Council had deliberately gone towards renewable energy and was very comfortable and very much supportive of that.

Councillor C Kent thanked Sean Clark for the report.

**RESOLVED**

**That the Standards and Audit Committee noted the report.**

**20. Work Programme**

Members agreed the work programme.

**The meeting finished at 8.38 pm**

Approved as a true and correct record

**CHAIR**

**DATE**

**Any queries regarding these Minutes, please contact  
Democratic Services at [Direct.Democracy@thurrock.gov.uk](mailto:Direct.Democracy@thurrock.gov.uk)**

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<b>25 November 2021</b>	<b>ITEM: 5</b>
<b>Standards and Audit Committee</b>	
<b>Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act (RIPA) - Activity Report 2021/22 (April to September)</b>	
<b>Wards and communities affected:</b> N/A	<b>Key Decision:</b> N/A
<b>Report of:</b> Lee Henley – Strategic Lead – Information Management	
<b>Accountable Strategic Lead:</b> Lee Henley – Strategic Lead – Information Management	
<b>Accountable Director:</b> Sean Clark – Corporate Director Resources and Place Delivery	
<b>This report is public</b>	

## Executive Summary

This report provides an update on the usage and activity of RIPA requests during the period April 2021 to September 2021.

### 1. Recommendation(s)

**1.1 To note the statistical information relating to the use of RIPA for the period April 2021 to September 2021.**

### 2. Introduction and Background

2.1 The Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 (RIPA), and the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012, legislates for the use of local authorities of covert methods of surveillance and information gathering to assist in the detection and prevention of crime in relation to an authority’s core functions.

2.2 The Investigatory Powers Commissioner's Office (IPCO) is responsible for the judicial oversight of the use of covert surveillance by public authorities throughout the United Kingdom.

2.3 The RIPA Single Point of Contact (SPOC) maintains a RIPA register of all directed surveillance RIPA requests and approvals across the council.

### 3. Issues, Options and Analysis of Options

3.1 **RIPA Activity:**

3.1.1 No RIPA surveillance authorisations were processed during April 2021 to September 2021. The table below summarises 2021/22 RIPA volumes along with the full year figures for 2020/21:

	2020/21	2021/22
Trading Standards	0	0
Fraud	1	0
Covert Human Intelligence Source (CHIS) authorisations	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>

3.1.2 Low numbers of RIPA authorisations are a result of the council utilising other forms of investigation due to its collaboration with the police and/or enforcement work being more overt rather than covert. In addition to this, the COVID pandemic has seen a reduction in the need for a response requiring the use of last resort tactics like covert direct surveillance authorisations. The council continues to work with partners across the public sector to ensure that Thurrock as an area is protected from crime.

3.1.3 The outcomes of the above RIPA directed surveillance authorisations cannot be summarised in detail. This is due to Data Protection requirements and to ensure that any on-going investigations are not compromised as a result of any disclosure of information.

3.1.4 The table below shows the number of requests made to the National Anti-Fraud Network (NAFN) for Communication Data requests: **Note** - 2020/21 figures are full year figures.

Application Type:	2020/21	2021/22
Events (Service) Data	1 (Fraud)	1 (Fraud)
Entity (Subscriber) Data	9 (Fraud)	2 (1 Fraud and 1 Trading Standards)
Combined	12 (11 Fraud and 1 Trading Standards)	3 (2 Fraud and 1 Trading Standards)
<b>Totals</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>6</b>

**Notes in relation to NAFN applications:**

- Events Data – Is information held by a telecom provider including itemised telephone bills and/or outgoing call data.
- Entity Data – Includes any other information or account details that a telecom provider holds e.g. billing information.

- Combined – Includes applications that contain both Events and Entity data.

#### **4. Reasons for Recommendation**

4.1 This report provides an update on the usage and activity of RIPA requests for April 2021 to September 2021.

#### **5. Consultation (including Overview and Scrutiny, if applicable)**

5.1 The RIPA SPOC has consulted with the relevant departments to obtain the data set out in this report.

#### **6. Impact on corporate policies, priorities, performance and community impact**

6.1 Monitoring compliance with RIPA supports the council's approach to corporate governance and will ensure the proper balance of maintaining order against protecting the rights of constituents within Thurrock.

#### **7. Implications**

##### **7.1 Financial**

Implications verified by: **Jonathan Wilson**  
**Assistant Director of Finance**

The reported RIPA Activity is funded from within agreed budget envelopes.

##### **7.2 Legal**

Implications verified by: **Ian Hunt**  
**Assistant Director of Law and Governance & Monitoring Officer**

There are no specific legal implications from this update report. Whilst the Council is empowered to use covert surveillance in investigations this should only be undertaken where they are necessary and proportionate and the evidence cannot be obtained in another more proportionate way.

##### **7.3 Diversity and Equality**

Implications verified by: **Natalie Smith**  
**Community Development and Equalities Manager**

There are no such implications directly related to this report.

7.4 **Other implications** (where significant) – i.e. Staff, Health Inequalities, Sustainability, Crime and Disorder and Impact on Looked After Children

None.

8. **Background papers used in preparing the report** (including their location on the council's website or identification whether any are exempt or protected by copyright):

None.

9. **Appendices to the report**

None.

**Report Author:**

Lee Henley

Strategic Lead - Information Management

<b>25 November 2021</b>		<b>ITEM: 6</b>
<b>Standards and Audit Committee</b>		
<b>Internal Audit Progress Report 2021/22</b>		
<b>Wards and communities affected:</b> All	<b>Key Decision:</b> Non-key	
<b>Report of:</b> Gary Clifford - Chief Internal Auditor		
<b>Accountable Assistant Director:</b> Ian Hunt - Assistant Director of Law & Governance		
<b>Accountable Director:</b> Sean Clark - Corporate Director Resources & Place Delivery		
<b>This report is public</b>		

## Executive Summary

The Internal Audit Plan 2021/22 was discussed by the Standards & Audit Committee at their meeting of 11 March 2021. This progress report covers final reports issued since the last progress report to the Standards & Audit Committee, draft reports issued and work in progress.

### 1. Recommendation(s)

#### 1.1 That the Standards & Audit Committee:

**Consider reports issued and the work being carried out by Internal Audit in relation to the 2021/22 audit plan.**

### 2. Introduction and Background

- 2.1 The Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 require that a relevant authority must undertake an effective internal audit to evaluate the effectiveness of its risk management, control and governance processes taking into account public sector internal auditing standards or guidance.
- 2.2 The Internal Audit Service carries out the work to satisfy this legislative requirement and part of this is reporting the outcome of its work to the Standards & Audit Committee.
- 2.3 The Standards & Audit Committee has a responsibility for reviewing the Council's corporate governance arrangements, including internal control and formally approving the Annual Governance Statement. The audit work carried out by the Internal Audit Service is a key source of assurance to the

Standards & Audit Committee about the operation of the internal control environment.

- 2.4 The audits contained in the Internal Audit Plan 2021/22 are based on an assessment of risk for each system or operational area. The assessment of risk includes elements such as the level of corporate importance, materiality, service delivery/importance and sensitivity.

### **3. Issues, Options and Analysis of Options**

- 3.1 The reports issued by Internal Audit provide 4 levels of assurance opinion. The 4 opinions use a Red/Amber/Green (RAG) assurance level and reports are now categorised as:
- Green; Amber/Green (positive assurance opinions);
  - Amber/Red (negative assurance opinion that provides some assurance but a number of weaknesses were identified); and
  - Red (negative assurance opinion).
- 3.2 The purpose of this progress report is not only to highlight reports issued as final but to provide members with an update on work which has reached the draft report stage and work currently in progress. The status of work currently being undertaken is shown at Appendix 1.
- 3.3 During the period being reported on, we have finalised 6 reports. 1 of these was an assurance reports on Planned Maintenance (Housing). Which received a Green (positive) assurance opinion.
- 3.4 The remaining 5 reports were consultancy reports to check and confirm Environmental Services' compliance against the requirements to continue to receive the British Standards Institution (BSI) ISO 9001 accreditation which demonstrates an organisations ability to consistently provide products and services that meet customer and regulatory requirements. The areas covered were: Active & Country Parks; Fleet; Infrastructure & Work Environment, Play Area Maintenance; and Street Cleaning. In all cases, the reports only identified some minor issues which the services are addressing. A common area amongst most of these reports was the fact that the service have been unable to maximise income due to the impact of the pandemic. As services return to a different, but more "normal" routine, it is anticipated by the service, that this will start to be addressed.
- 3.5 It should be noted that whilst we do not provide a formal assurance opinion when carrying out consultancy/advisory reviews, the work we carry out does provide members with additional assurance around the controls, risk management and governance in those areas. As with an assurance piece of work, we do make recommendations which we agree with management and report to the Standards & Audit Committee.
- 3.6 During the period covered by this report, one of the Internal Auditors left the service. This clearly impacted upon delivery of the plan and a business case

has been developed to fill the 2 vacant Internal Auditor posts. It is anticipated this business case will be submitted to HR within the next month. Members will be updated on progress with this at the next meeting.

#### **4. Reasons for Recommendation**

- 4.1 To assist the Standards & Audit Committee in satisfying itself that progress against the Internal Audit Plan is sufficient as one of the means of assuring itself of the effective operation of internal controls.

#### **5. Consultation (including Overview and Scrutiny, if applicable)**

- 5.1 The audit risk assessment and the plan are periodically discussed with the Chief Executive, Corporate Directors, Directors and Assistant Directors before being reported to Directors Board and the Standards & Audit Committee.
- 5.2 All terms of reference and draft reports are discussed and agreed with the relevant Corporate Directors, Directors, Assistant Directors and/or management before being finalised.
- 5.3 The Internal Audit Service also consults with the council's External Auditors to ensure that respective audit plans provide full coverage whilst avoiding duplication.

#### **6. Impact on corporate policies, priorities, performance and community impact**

- 6.1 The council's corporate priorities were used to inform the annual audit plan 2021/22. Recommendations made are designed to further the implementation of these corporate priorities.

#### **7. Implications**

##### **7.1 Financial**

Implications verified by: **Jonathan Wilson**  
**Assistant Director - Finance**

Whilst there are no direct financial implications arising from this report, it is important that the authority maintains adequate internal controls to safeguard the authority's assets. The costs associated with the implementation of audit recommendations will be considered and, where possible, met from existing budgets.

## 7.2 Legal

Implications verified by: **Gina Clarke**  
**Corporate Governance Lawyer**

The contents of this report and appendixes form part of the council's responsibility to comply with the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 and the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015, to ensure that it has a sound system of internal control which facilitates the effective exercise of its functions and achievement of its aims and objectives, including to at least annually undertake an effective internal audit to, amongst other things, evaluate the effectiveness of its risk management, control and governance processes taking into account public sector internal auditing standards or guidance. The council has delegated responsibility for ensuring this is taking place to the Standards & Audit Committee. There are no legal implications directly arising from this report.

## 7.3 Diversity and Equality

Implications verified by: **Roxanne Scanlon**  
**Community Engagement and Project  
Monitoring Officer, Adults, Housing & Health**

There are no direct diversity or equality implications arising from this report.

## 7.4 Other implications (where significant) – – i.e. Staff, Health Inequalities, Sustainability, Crime and Disorder and Impact on Looked After Children

In terms of risk and opportunity management, the Internal Audit Plan and its outcomes are a key part of the council's risk management and assurance frameworks. The Internal Audit Plan is based on risk assessments that include a review of the council's risk and opportunity register.

## 8. Background papers used in preparing the report:

- Strategy for Internal Audit 2020/21 to 2022/23 and Internal Audit Plan 2020/21
- Internal Audit Reports issued in 2021/22.

## 9. Appendices to the report

Appendix 1 – Internal Audit Progress Report.

### Report Author:

Gary Clifford, Chief Internal Auditor, Thurrock Council Internal Audit Service,  
Resources & Place Delivery



# Thurrock Council

## Standards & Audit Committee

## Internal Audit Progress Report 2020/21

Date of Committee: 25<sup>th</sup> November 2021

# Introduction

The internal audit plan for 2021/22 was presented to the Standards & Audit Committee on 11<sup>th</sup> March 2021.

**Table showing reports issued as Final, in Draft and Work in Progress (WIP)**

Assignment	Status	Opinion	Actions Agreed (by priority)		
			High	Medium	Low
<b>Audits to address specific risks</b>					
<b>Planned Maintenance (Housing)</b>	Final	Green	0	1	4
<b>BSI ISO 9001 Quality Review – Active &amp; Country Parks</b>	Final	Advisory	0	0	1
<b>BSI ISO 9001 Quality Review - Fleet</b>	Final	Advisory	0	0	1
<b>BSI ISO 9001 Quality Review – Infrastructure &amp; Work Environment</b>	Final	Advisory	0	0	1
<b>BSI ISO 9001 Quality Review – Play Area Maintenance</b>	Final	Advisory	0	0	1
<b>BSI ISO 9001 Quality Review – Street Cleaning</b>	Final	Advisory	0	0	1
<b>Premises Licencing</b>	Draft with client	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
<b>Induction/Probation (Onboarding)</b>	Draft with client	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
<b>Climate Change</b>	Draft with client	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
<b>Duplicate Payments</b>	Draft	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
<b>Housing Rents</b>	WIP	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
<b>Children &amp; Adults Commissioning of Services</b>	WIP	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
<b>Homelessness</b>	WIP	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
<b>Housing Voids</b>	WIP	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

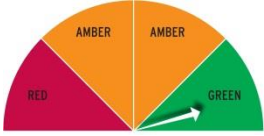
## **Work and other issues for which no reports are generated**

The work around the payment by results funding provided as part of the troubled families programme continues. However, this is likely to be impacted as the Internal Auditor who undertook this work has left the Authority. In addition, this Auditor undertook the BSI ISO 9001 work which will also be impacted.

## **Changes to the Annual Plan**

There have been no significant changes to the plan although Corporate Finance asked for the review on Financial Sustainability to be deferred due to their work on closing the accounts.

## Key Findings from Internal Audit Work

Assignment: Planned Maintenance (Housing)	Opinion: Green	
<p><b>Headline Findings:</b> Our review of the <b>Planned Maintenance (Housing)</b> identified 1 medium and 4 low recommendations around the adequacy of the control framework. The review looked at the following risks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The process for identifying repairs may not be adequately designed or may not be operating effectively.</li> <li>• Identified repairs may not be scheduled and carried out within a reasonable time.</li> <li>• Adequate financial control processes may not be in place to ensure the council gets value for its money.</li> <li>• Planned maintenance contracts may not be effectively managed to ensure delivery of quality service.</li> <li>• Performance may not be monitored and reported to senior management.</li> <li>• The planned maintenance programme may not be managed efficiently resulting in costs escalations and budget overruns.</li> <li>• Appropriate governance processes may not be in place to ensure the effective management of the council's planned maintenance programme.</li> </ul> <p>Good controls were identified across all these areas. There has not been an audit in this area for a number of years so there were no recommendations to check.</p>		
Action and Response	Responsible Officer	Date
<p><b>Action</b> – A full stock condition survey should be carried to generate up to date stock condition information that provides an objective basis for planning works and developing applicable maintenance programmes.</p> <p>A clear policy regarding timeframes for undertaking stock condition surveys should be developed and documented to provide clear guidance to staff.</p> <p><b>Response</b> - The housing department undertook a stock condition survey in 2017/18 for 30 % of our stock. We are currently in the process of preparing a tender for a new stock condition survey to be undertaken over the next 9 months again this will be for a 30% sample.</p> <p>This stock condition survey data will be utilised to inform further capital and revenue work streams that also cover planned maintenance where applicable.</p> <p>New assets management policy is currently in development and due to be published by April 2022.</p>	<p>Asset Investment &amp; Delivery Manager</p>	<p>June 2021</p>

Assignment: BSI ISO 9001 – Quality Review – Active & Country Parks	Consultancy	Opinion not provided
<p>The standard requires that “Top management should review, at planned intervals, the Quality Management System (QMS) components including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Policy and Objectives;</li> <li>• Internal Audits (including control of non-conformities, corrective and preventative actions);</li> <li>• Customer Feedback/satisfaction and communication;</li> <li>• Infrastructure and work environment;</li> <li>• Management Review (including Analysis of information); and</li> <li>• Senior Management.</li> </ul> <p>This helps the organisation to ensure that the QMS continues to be suitable, adequate and effective and is aligned with the strategic direction of the organisation”.</p> <p><b>Headline Findings:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Legislation changes and policies have been incorporated into strategies and policies;</li> <li>• Team planning was evident and management plans in place for each area of business;</li> <li>• Roles and responsibilities were understood by staff;</li> <li>• Safety training was undertaken and ongoing, but electronic records were hard to find;</li> <li>• Vehicles, plant and equipment were available and maintained by Fleet Services, although an improvement plan for remote sites may need to be revisited;</li> <li>• Operations were delivered as planned within limitations at Langdon Hills due to a lack of resources;</li> <li>• Performance and budgets were monitored regularly at management meetings;</li> <li>• Fees and charges were advertised and benchmarked, however income potential did not appear to be fully explored or resourced;</li> <li>• System and service improvements were evident including future proofing;</li> <li>• Change management was ongoing;</li> <li>• Risk assessment was effective and part of the planning process;</li> <li>• Customer satisfaction was effective and improvements implemented.</li> </ul> <p><b>Observations:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Training records need to be stored and easily accessible on Objective;</li> <li>• Recommendations to improve safety of the equipment needs to be reviewed;</li> <li>• Maximising income has not been fully explored due to resourcing issues at Langdon Hills Country Park.</li> </ul>		

Assignment: BSI ISO 9001 – Quality Review – Fleet	Consultancy	Opinion not provided
<p>The standard requires that “Top management should review, at planned intervals, the Quality Management System (QMS) components including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Policy and Objectives;</li> <li>• Internal Audits (including control of non-conformities, corrective and preventative actions);</li> <li>• Customer Feedback/satisfaction and communication;</li> <li>• Infrastructure and work environment;</li> <li>• Management Review (including Analysis of information); and</li> <li>• Senior Management.</li> </ul> <p>This helps the organisation to ensure that the QMS continues to be suitable, adequate and effective and is aligned with the strategic direction of the organisation”.</p> <p><b>Headline Findings:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Legislation changes and policies have been incorporated in to strategies and policies;</li> <li>• Team planning was evident and management plans in place for each area of business;</li> <li>• Roles and responsibilities were understood by staff;</li> <li>• Safety training was undertaken and ongoing;</li> <li>• Vehicles, plant and equipment were available and maintained by Fleet Services;</li> <li>• Operations were delivered as planned;</li> </ul>		

- Performance and budgets were monitored regularly at management meetings;
- Fees and charges were advertised and benchmarked;
- System and service improvements were evident including future proofing;
- Change management was ongoing;
- Risk assessment was effective and part of the planning process;
- Customer satisfaction was effective and improvements implemented.

**Observations:**

- Maximising income has not been fully reached due to COVID-19.

Assignment: BSI ISO 9001 – Quality Review – Infrastructure & Work Environment	Consultancy	Opinion not provided
<p>The standard requires that “Top management should review, at planned intervals, the Quality Management System (QMS) components including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Policy and Objectives;</li> <li>• Internal Audits (including control of non-conformities, corrective and preventative actions);</li> <li>• Customer Feedback/satisfaction and communication;</li> <li>• Infrastructure and work environment;</li> <li>• Management Review (including Analysis of information); and</li> <li>• Senior Management.</li> </ul> <p>This helps the organisation to ensure that the QMS continues to be suitable, adequate and effective and is aligned with the strategic direction of the organisation”.</p> <p><b>Headline Findings:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Legislation changes and policies have been incorporated into strategies and policies;</li> <li>• Team planning was evident and management plans in place for each area of business;</li> <li>• Roles and responsibilities were understood by staff;</li> <li>• Safety training was undertaken and ongoing;</li> <li>• Vehicles, plant and equipment were available and maintained by Fleet Services;</li> <li>• Operations were delivered as planned;</li> <li>• Performance and budgets were monitored regularly at management meetings;</li> <li>• Fees and charges were advertised and benchmarked;</li> <li>• System and service improvements were evident including future proofing;</li> <li>• Change management was ongoing;</li> <li>• Risk assessment was effective and part of the planning process; and</li> <li>• Customer satisfaction was effective and improvements implemented.</li> </ul> <p><b>Observations:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maximising income has not been fully reached due to COVID-19.</li> </ul>		

Assignment: BSI ISO 9001 – Quality Review – Play Area Maintenance	Consultancy	Opinion not provided
<p>The standard requires that “Top management should review, at planned intervals, the Quality Management System (QMS) components including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Policy and Objectives;</li> <li>• Internal Audits (including control of non-conformities, corrective and preventative actions);</li> <li>• Customer Feedback/satisfaction and communication;</li> <li>• Infrastructure and work environment;</li> <li>• Management Review (including Analysis of information); and</li> <li>• Senior Management.</li> </ul> <p>This helps the organisation to ensure that the QMS continues to be suitable, adequate and effective and is aligned with the strategic direction of the organisation”.</p> <p><b>Headline Findings:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Key strategies were being revised: Local Development Plan and Active Play Strategy;</li> </ul>		

- Team planning was evident;
- Roles and responsibilities were understood by staff;
- Safety training was undertaken and ongoing, however, accessibility to staff certificates was difficult;
- Vehicles, plant and equipment was available and maintained by Fleet Services;
- Operations were delivered as planned;
- Performance and budgets were on target;
- Fees and charges were not applicable to this area;
- System and service improvements were evident including future proofing;
- Change management was ongoing;
- Risk assessment was effective and part of the planning process;
- Customer satisfaction was effective and improvements implemented;
- Procurement is managed centrally and through Fleet and Stores, however the impact of leaving the EU may add to future costs.

**Observations:**

- Safety training certificates were not easily accessible.
- There may be implications re leaving Europe, and time taken to receive the parts/equipment needed. Costs may rise.

Assignment: BSI ISO 9001 – Quality Review – Street Cleaning	Consultancy	Opinion not provided
<p>The standard requires that “Top management should review, at planned intervals, the Quality Management System (QMS) components including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Policy and Objectives;</li> <li>• Internal Audits (including control of non-conformities, corrective and preventative actions);</li> <li>• Customer Feedback/satisfaction and communication;</li> <li>• Infrastructure and work environment;</li> <li>• Management Review (including Analysis of information); and</li> <li>• Senior Management.</li> </ul> <p>This helps the organisation to ensure that the QMS continues to be suitable, adequate and effective and is aligned with the strategic direction of the organisation”.</p> <p><b>Headline Findings:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Legislation changes and strategic policies were reviewed recently;</li> <li>• Team planning was evident at a strategic and operational level;</li> <li>• Roles and responsibilities were understood by staff;</li> <li>• Vehicles, plant and equipment was available and maintained by Fleet Services;</li> <li>• Safety training was undertaken and ongoing;</li> <li>• Operations for Street Cleaning functions were delivered as planned and recorded;</li> <li>• Performance indicators were on target, regularly monitored and reported;</li> <li>• Fees and Charges were costed, and details available to the public;</li> <li>• System and service improvements were evident including technological systems and future proofing;</li> <li>• Change management was ongoing during Bartech trials;</li> <li>• Risk assessment was effective and part of the business planning process;</li> <li>• Customer satisfaction was effective and improvements implemented through the corporate mechanism;</li> <li>• Records were maintained on Objective EDRMS management system.</li> </ul> <p><b>Observations:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Training records for Waste operatives need to be accessible and reported to Fleet regularly, in order to maintain the DCQ license requirements in a timely manner.</li> <li>• PPE equipment should be recorded and monitored in a more robust manner, however, a new Stores Manual is being produced which will aim to strengthen the controls around requisitions and approvals.</li> </ul>		

<b>25 November 2021</b>	<b>ITEM: 7</b>
<b>Standards and Audit Committee</b>	
<b>Counter Fraud &amp; Investigation Quarterly Update (Q2)</b>	
<b>Wards and communities affected:</b> All	<b>Key Decision:</b> N/A
<b>Report of:</b> Michael Dineen, Strategic Lead, Counter Fraud & Investigation, Public Realm	
<b>Accountable Assistant Director:</b> David Kleinberg, Assistant Director for Counter Fraud & Investigation, Public Realm	
<b>Accountable Director:</b> Julie Rogers – Director of Public Realm	
<b>This report is Public</b>	

## Executive Summary

The Counter Fraud & Investigation service is responsible for the prevention, detection and deterrence of all instances of alleged economic crime affecting the authority including: allegations of fraud, theft, corruption, bribery and money laundering.

This report outlines the performance of the CFI team over the last quarter (Q2) for Thurrock Council as well as the work the team have delivered nationally for other public bodies.

### 1. Recommendation

#### 1.1 The Standard and Audit Committee comments on the performance of the Counter Fraud & Investigation Department.

### 2. Introduction & Background

2.1 The council's Counter Fraud team is responsible for delivering the corporate counter fraud programme which includes proactive work to enhance the council's controls as well as respond to intelligence from that proactive work and information from other sources.

### 3. Performance

3.1 CFI receives reports about suspected fraud from the public, government and law enforcement partners, internal referral mechanisms and proactive

operations. The figures show the performance of the department for Quarter 2 (Q2) of 2021/22.

- 90 reports of suspected fraud have been received in Q2

Housing	Transport	Social Care	Revenues	RTB	Theft	DWP Referral	Other
46	4	1	12	14	1	3	9

- 46 Investigations have been closed this year
- 4 sanctions have been delivered in cases of proven fraud
- Value of Detected Fraud in this second Quarter is £153,000
- 3 Social housing properties have been recovered
- 144 active investigations are currently being conducted

Housing	Transport	Social Care	Revenues	RTB	Theft	DWP Referral	Other
78	8	2	17	22	2	1	14

3.2 The ring-fenced National Investigation Service (NATIS) function continues to support both central and local government bodies, with over 180 public bodies supported so far in tackling serious and organised crime across the country.

#### 4. Work Plan for 2021/22

4.1 CFI has a programme of proactive work to ensure the council's controls against fraud are robust and effective. That plan was presented and accepted by the Standards and Audit Committee in July 2021. **Appendix 1** sets out the progress made in delivering the Counter Fraud & Investigation Work Plan 2020/21.

4.2 The work programme is a working document and if during the year changes or additions to the plan are proposed between the CFI and the Section 151 Officer, these will be brought back to the Committee for approval.

#### 5. Reasons for Recommendation

5.1 This report provides a detailed update to the Committee on the counter-fraud measures for the Council and how it is reducing fraud under the council's counter-fraud strategy.

#### 6. Consultation (including Overview and Scrutiny, if applicable)

6.1 All Directors and Heads of Service were consulted with the current strategy to be taken by the Council in its counter-fraud approach.

#### 7. Impact on corporate policies, priorities, performance and community impact



7.1 Work undertaken by CFI to reduce fraud and enhance the Council's anti-fraud and corruption culture contributes to the delivery of all its aims and priorities supporting good corporate governance.

## **8. Implications**

### **8.1 Financial**

Implications verified by: **Laura Last**  
**Senior Management Accountant, Finance**

There are no financial implications arising from this report.

### **8.2 Legal**

Implications verified by: **Deirdre Collins**  
**Senior Barrister, Legal Services**

There are no legal implication.

### **8.3 Diversity and Equality**

Implications verified by: **Roxanne Scanlon**  
**Community Engagement and Project  
Monitoring Officer, Adults, Housing & Health**

There are no social or community issues surrounding this report. There are also no Diversity or Equality issues.

8.4 **Other implications** (where significant) – i.e. Staff, Health Inequalities, Sustainability, Crime and Disorder and Impact on Looked After Children

None.

**9. Background papers used in preparing the report** (including their location on the Council's website or identification whether any are exempt or protected by copyright):

Counter Fraud & Investigation Policy & Strategy – [thurrock.gov.uk/fraud](http://thurrock.gov.uk/fraud)  
Counter Money Laundering Policy & Strategy – [thurrock.gov.uk/fraud](http://thurrock.gov.uk/fraud)  
CroweClarkWhitehill Annual Fraud Indicator – [crowe.co.uk](http://crowe.co.uk)

## **10. Appendices to the report**

Appendix 1 – Counter Fraud Work Plan 2021/22

Report Author:  
Michael Dineen, Strategic Lead for Counter Fraud & Investigation

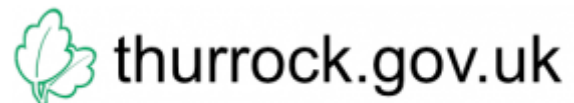
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## Counter Fraud & Investigation



See it. Report it. Stop it.

# Counter Fraud Work Plan 2021/22



## Our Fraud Control Strategy

CF&I uses a Control Strategy to focus its work in the right areas for Thurrock. That approach ensures that we are able to identify at the earliest stage intelligence relating to the key priorities below, particularly those affecting the most vulnerable of society.

### Who are We?

A specialist function to protect public finance from fraud and serious crime, using our legal framework as a local authority service

### What is Our Purpose?

- 1 Protect the public purse from crime
- 2 Support the wider-public sector with shared, advanced capabilities

### What are Our Priorities?

Crimes affecting a vulnerable adult or child

Insider threats in local government

Organised crime targeting local government

Improving local government's resilience to cyber crime

### How do we Succeed?

Always acting Ethically in everything that we do, working to our values, attitudes and principles

Consider opportunities to work collaboratively with others for the benefit of our purpose, sharing our knowledge, experience and expertise

Apply the 4 'P' Strategy to Prevent, Protect and Prepare local government for economic crime, pursuing offenders where necessary

Ensure our teams are fully equipped to respond to the threats faced from economic crime

## Proactive Work Plan 2020/21

Risk Area	Activity	When	Current Status	Responsible Officer	Date Complete
Council-wide	<p><b>Training of high risk areas in counter fraud measures</b></p> <p>Ensure understanding of the threats posed to those areas. To be tailored to the areas and ongoing support offered via a Single Point of Contact with CFI</p>	06/21 To 05/22	Targeted Virtual Training Sessions have been delivered to teams across the council, particularly those services seeing high volumes of work. This is being completed with CFI Staff delivering training to various departments including Housing in person now.	Phil Butt	
Council-wide	<p><b>Review all relevant policies concerning fraud aspects</b></p> <p>Ensuring that all hold the most up to date legislative information as well as ensuring best practice is always adhered to.</p>	01/22	No Changes are required at this time. This will be an ongoing review, where changes will be brought to the attention of senior staff and councillors.	Michael Dineen	
Revenues & Treasury	<p><b>COVID-19 Business Grants Counter Fraud Programme</b></p> <p>The council has awarded £19m of government grants to businesses during the COVID-19 pandemic. The team will be using the Counter Fraud tools provided by the Cabinet Office and commercial sector to assure the payment already made and prevent future frauds.</p> <p><i>(Continued from 2020/21 due to ongoing grants)</i></p>	06/21 To 05/22	CFI continues to assist where required, however this requirement has diminished due to grants ending. CFI will always be available for these checks should the need arise though	David Nash	
Council-wide	<p><b>Renewed Education &amp; Marketing Campaign for Countering Fraud, Housing Fraud, Insider Threats and Corruption</b></p>	12/21	This is in its final stages of design and will be taken to Senior Management and then committee before being displayed online and 'in house' at the civic offices.	Nicholas Coker	
Council-wide	<p><b>Targeting POCA and Civil Legislation to maximise effect on criminal behaviour</b></p> <p>Ensure that CFI utilise the appropriate legislation to maximise the effects on criminals and ensure that our</p>	06/21 To 05/22	This is a continued piece of work and we have had POCA cases raised by the CFT and they will continue to do so.	Roger Noakes	

Risk Area	Activity	When	Current Status	Responsible Officer	Date Complete
	vision of protecting the public purse is adhered to by promoting this work.				

**Standards & Audit Committee  
Work Programme  
2021/22**

Dates of Meetings: 8 July 2021, 9 September 2021, 25 November 2021 and 10 March 2022

Topic	Lead Officer
<b>8 July 2021</b>	
Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act (RIPA) 2000 - 2020/21 Activity Report	Lee Henley
Chief Internal Auditor's Annual Report – Year ended 31 March 2021	Gary Clifford
Counter Fraud & Investigation Annual Report & Strategy	David Kleinberg
Annual Information Governance Report	Lee Henley
Red Reports (as required)	
<b>9 September 2021</b>	
Annual Complaints & Enquiries Report 2020/21	Lee Henley
Counter Fraud & Investigation Performance Report Q1	David Kleinberg
Internal Audit Charter 2021	Gary Clifford

Refresh of the Strategic/Corporate Risk and Opportunity Register	Andy Owen
Investment Briefing	Sean Clark
A13 Widening Project	Sean Clark / Colin Black
Stanford Le Hope Transport Projects	Sean Clark / Colin Black
Red Reports (as required)	
<b>25 November 2021</b>	
Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act (RIPA) - Activity Report 2021/22 (April to September)	Lee Henley
Internal Audit Progress Report 2021/22	Gary Clifford
Counter Fraud & Investigation Performance Report Q2	David Kleinberg
Red Reports (as required)	
<b>10 March 2022</b>	
External Audit Plan 2021/22	Lisa Clampin (BDO)/Jonathan Wilson
Complaints and Enquiries Report – April 2021 to September 2021	Lee Henley
Annual Review of Risk and Opportunity Management and the Policy, Strategy and Framework	Andy Owen



In Quarter 4 Review of the Strategic/Corporate Risk & Opportunity Register	Andy Owen
Internal Audit Progress Report 2021/22	Gary Clifford
Counter Fraud & Investigation Performance Report Q3	David Kleinberg
Thurrock Annual Audit Letter 2020/21	BDO / Sean Clark
3 Year Strategy 2021/22 to 2023/24 and Annual Plan 2022/23	Gary Clifford
Red Reports (as required)	

To reschedule for 2021/22

Audit Completion Report	BDO / Sean Clark / Jonathan Wilson
Financial Statements and Annual Governance Statement 2020/21	BDO / Sean Clark / Jonathan Wilson

Clerk: Jenny Shade  
Last Updated: November 2021

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