

<b>Report to:</b>	Cabinet	<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	5 October 2023
<b>Subject:</b>	Anti-Fraud, Bribery and Corruption Policy		
<b>Report of:</b>	Executive Director of Corporate Resources and Customer Services	<b>Wards Affected:</b>	(All Wards);
<b>Portfolio:</b>	Cabinet Member - Regulatory, Compliance and Corporate Services		
<b>Is this a Key Decision:</b>	Yes	<b>Included in Forward Plan:</b>	Yes
<b>Exempt / Confidential Report:</b>	No.		

### Summary:

The purpose of this report is to obtain Cabinet approval for the revised Sefton Council Anti-Fraud, Bribery and Corruption Policy for adoption by the Council. The existing Policy has been reviewed and revised to strengthen and improve the Council's overall arrangements for the prevention, detection and investigation of fraud, bribery and corruption.

The revised Policy provides guidance on how any individual can report, in confidence, any suspected fraudulent or corrupt activity.

### Recommendation(s):

(1) Approve the revised Sefton Council Anti-Fraud, Bribery and Corruption Policy for adoption by the Council.

### Reasons for the Recommendation:

The Council is required by law to protect the public funds it administers and to raise awareness in relation to any potential threats that may affect the financial and/or reputational position of the Council. The revised Council Anti-Fraud, Bribery and Corruption Policy will support the Council's commitment to creating an environment in which fraud, bribery and corruption is minimised and complements a number of other Council policies which support internal controls and expected standards of behaviour.

### Alternative Options Considered and Rejected: (including any Risk Implications)

If the Council fails to put in place proper policies regarding fraud, bribery and corruption, it will be unable to demonstrate adherence to proper practices in relation to the prevention and detection of fraud and its actions or decisions could be challenged. The Council also faces financial and reputational risk in that: -

- Standards of public service that the Council is attempting to achieve are undermined.
- Financial resources available to pay for vital services are reduced.
- Public confidence in the Council is affected.

**What will it cost and how will it be financed?**

**(A) Revenue Costs-** There are no revenue costs associated with the Policy outside of the approved budget.

**(B) Capital Costs-** There are no capital costs associated with the Policy

**Implications of the Proposals:**

<b>Resource Implications (Financial, IT, Staffing and Assets):</b> None arising from this report.								
<b>Legal Implications:</b> S151 Local Government Act 1972 states that “every Local Authority is under a statutory duty to secure the proper administration of its financial affairs” (i.e., to safeguard public funds).								
<b>Equality Implications:</b> There are no equality implications.								
<b>Impact on Children and Young People:</b> No								
<b>Climate Emergency Implications:</b>  The recommendations within this report will <table border="1"><tr><td>Have a positive impact</td><td>No</td></tr><tr><td>Have a neutral impact</td><td>Yes</td></tr><tr><td>Have a negative impact</td><td>No</td></tr><tr><td>The Author has undertaken the Climate Emergency training for report authors</td><td>Yes</td></tr></table> The policy has no impact on the climate emergency.	Have a positive impact	No	Have a neutral impact	Yes	Have a negative impact	No	The Author has undertaken the Climate Emergency training for report authors	Yes
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Have a neutral impact	Yes							
Have a negative impact	No							
The Author has undertaken the Climate Emergency training for report authors	Yes							

**Contribution to the Council’s Core Purpose:**

Protect the most vulnerable: None.
Facilitate confident and resilient communities: None.
Commission, broker and provide core services: Effective measures to counter the risk of fraud, bribery and corruption will contribute to the effective function of governance arrangements at the Council, helping to minimise losses and risks to the organisation and thereby contributing to the achievement of overall Council priorities.
Place – leadership and influencer: None
Drivers of change and reform: None
Facilitate sustainable economic prosperity: None.

Greater income for social investment: None
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Cleaner Greener: None
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## What consultations have taken place on the proposals and when?

### (A) Internal Consultations

The Executive Director of Corporate Resources and Customer Services (FD.7336/23) and the Chief Legal and Democratic Officer (LD.5536/23) have been consulted and any comments have been incorporated into the report.

### (B) External Consultations

Not relevant for the purposes of this report.

## Implementation Date for the Decision

Following the expiry of the “call-in” period for the Minutes of the Cabinet Meeting.

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## Appendices:

The following appendices are attached to this report:

- Appendix 1 – Sefton Council Anti- Fraud, Bribery and Corruption Policy

## Background Papers:

There are no background papers available for inspection.

### 1. Introduction

1.1 Sefton Council’s (“the Council”) Anti-Fraud, Bribery and Corruption Policy (“the Policy) was last reviewed in October 2016 and since that time monitoring of the Policy arrangements has been conducted by the Council’s Audit and Governance Committee.

1.2 The Policy is an integral part of a range of inter-related Council policies and procedures that provide a corporate framework to help counter any fraudulent activity. These have been formulated in line with appropriate legislative requirements and professional best practice and include: -

- Code of Conduct for Members
- Code of Conduct for Employees
- Confidential reporting -Whistle-Blowing Policy
- Corporate Complaints Procedures
- Recruitment and Selection Procedures

- Disciplinary procedures and guidelines
- Contract Procedure Rules
- ICT Acceptable Use Policy

## **2. Anti-Fraud, Bribery and Corruption Policy**

- 2.1 The Policy sets out the Council's position in respect of fraud, bribery and corruption and is applicable to all aspect of the Council's business, its members, employees, contractors and any persons or organisations doing business with the Council.
- 2.2 The Policy has been reviewed to ensure it continues to meet good practice principles and align with the Government's counter fraud and corruption strategy for local government.
- 2.3 The Policy is intended as a high-level statement of overall principles and approach rather than detailed guidance and sets out:
- The Council's commitment to the protection of public funds
  - The approach to managing the risk of fraud, bribery and corruption.
  - The strategy in preventing, detecting and investigating fraud, bribery and corruption.
  - Guidance on how an individual can report suspected fraudulent or corrupt activity.
  - Expected behaviour of Members and Employees, the Public and External Parties who have dealings with the Council.
  - Key Roles and Responsibilities in minimising the risk of fraud, bribery and corruption.
  - The Council's main rules and procedures aimed at preventing fraud, bribery and corruption.
  - Types of fraud – some examples
  - Risk factors
- 2.4 A copy of the revised Policy can be found in Appendix 1. The changes to the policy include minor alterations to reflect job titles and post holders.

## **3. Monitoring arrangements**

- 3.1 The Policy will form part of the Council's monitoring arrangements conducted by the Audit and Governance Committee ("the Committee).
- 3.2 The monitoring role of the Committee includes the consideration of the Council's internal control systems, risk management and corporate governance issues.
- 3.3 As part of its role the Committee will ensure that the Policy.
- Continues to comply with relevant legislation and best practice.
  - Remains effective, in acting as a deterrent against acts of fraud, bribery and corruption.