

AGENDA ITEM: 7

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Meeting	Audit Committee
Date	19 March 2008
Subject	Annual Workplan of the Corporate Anti Fraud Team 2008/09
Report of	Deputy Director of Corporate Governance
Summary	The Committee is asked to note the Annual Workplan of the Corporate Anti Fraud Team 2008/09

Officer Contributors	Val Lambe Corporate Anti Fraud Team Manager Dorne Kanareck, Deputy Director of Corporate Governance
Status (public or exempt)	Public
Wards affected	N/A
Enclosures	Corporate Anti Fraud Team Annual Workplan 2008/09
For decision by	Audit Committee
Function of	Council
Reason for urgency / exemption from call-in (if appropriate)	N/A

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1. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1.1 That the Committee note the contents of the CAFT Annual Workplan for 2008/09 and that the Committee consider item 9.4 and await an updated Workplan once a response from the DWP is received.**
- 1.2. That the Committee consider whether there are any areas on which they require additional information or action.**

2. RELEVANT PREVIOUS DECISIONS

- 2.1 The Corporate Anti Fraud Team (CAFT) was launched on 7 May 2004 (delegated powers report, ref: BT/2004-05 -2 March 2004)
- 2.2 On 4 April 2006, the Audit Committee included in the work programme for 2006/7, that an annual workplan of the Corporate Anti Fraud Team be produced to this meeting.

3. CORPORATE PRIORITIES AND POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

- 3.1 The Council's Corporate Plan has set eight key objectives to provide more choice and better value over the next four years, the work of the Corporate Anti Fraud Team supports this through delivering value for money through better use of resources.

4. RISK MANAGEMENT ISSUES

- 4.1 The Corporate Anti Fraud Team has a duty to the Council in the protection of the public purse through prevention, detection, investigation and deterrence of fraud.

5. EQUALITIES AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

- 5.1 The Corporate Anti Fraud Team is committed to promoting equality, challenging discrimination and developing community cohesion. This will be demonstrated through the Annual Workplan and our service delivery.
- 5.2 Our Annual Workplan will have no adverse impact or diversity issues. CAFT have worked closely with the Benefits Service in ensuring that forms and leaflets have been modified and adapted so that all members of the community, especially vulnerable groups, have an understanding of the services provided and reduce the likelihood of intentional or other fraud being committed.

6. FINANCIAL, STAFFING, ICT AND PROPERTY IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 None

7. LEGAL ISSUES

- 7.1 None

8. CONSTITUTIONAL POWERS

- 8.1 The Constitution, Part 3, Paragraph 2, details the functions of the Audit Committee including, "To monitor Council policies on Raising Concerns at Work" and the anti-fraud and anti-corruption strategy and the Council's complaints process".

9 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 9.1 The CAFT consists of;

- Visiting / HBMS Team
- Intelligence Team
- Investigation Team
- Support Team

- 9.2 The team continues to operate within the Counter Fraud Framework. The Framework consists of a set of comprehensive documents which details the Council's Fraud Response Plan, Fraud Reporting Toolkit, Prosecution Policy and the Whistle blowing Policy.

- 9.3 Both the authority's internal and external auditors have expressed positive feedback, particularly in relation to the introduction of the Counter Fraud Framework.

- 9.4 The CAFT Workplan for 2008/09 sets out the key objectives for the year. This Workplan will need to be revisited and updated as it does not include all our key objectives for the year. This will be finalised once instructions from the Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) are given.

The DWP are currently in consultation over the new performance indicators to be included into the Performance Framework from April 2008 and I am unable to define specific key service objectives until this decision is reached.

10. LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 10.1 None

Legal: JL
CFO: CM

Corporate Anti-Fraud Team

Annual Workplan 2008-2009

1. Background Information	
1.1 Organisational Vision	<p>The Council is committed to demonstrating that services represent value for money and that there is a continuous drive to improve quality, efficiency and effectiveness of services. The work of the Corporate Anti Fraud Team (CAFT) supports this whilst delivering a ZERO tolerance agenda on Fraud and Corruption within the London Borough Barnet.</p> <p>The aim and objective of CAFT is to provide a specialist investigation service to the Council as well as giving advice and assistance, and providing a comprehensive Fraud Awareness Training and Education programme throughout the organisation. The team continues to operate within the Counter Fraud Framework which consists of a set of comprehensive documents which details the Council's Fraud Response Plan, Fraud Reporting Toolkit, Prosecution Policy and the Whistle Blowing Policy.</p> <p>CAFT continually strives to develop partnership links and protocols with other agencies and the community in the area of Fraud Awareness, Prevention and Detection.</p>
1.2 Description of Theme Services	<p>Investigation of Internal fraud and corruption. Investigation of Housing and Council Tax Benefit fraud. The assistance in the identification of incorrect Housing and Council Tax Benefit awards. The administration of the Housing Benefit Data Matching Service (HBMS) data matches. Delivery of a comprehensive Fraud Awareness Training and Education Programme.</p>
1.3 Directorate Description	<p>The Corporate Governance Directorate promotes the highest standards of conduct, accountability and transparency in the way the Council and its partnerships operate. Safeguarding the Council's legal interests and democratic responsibilities, providing independent audit assurance, and assisting in delivering the anti-crime strategy.</p>
2. Key Priority Plans 2008/09	
2.1 Key Objective	<p>There will no longer be Key Priority Plans in 2008/09 for CAFT to report on, instead we will be setting performance priorities based on the targets defined by the Department of Work and Pensions (DWP), Best Value Performance Indicators (BVPs), good practice and changes in legislation.</p>

These performance priorities will be finalised once instructions from the Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) are given. The DWP are currently in consultation over the new performance indicators to be included into the Performance Framework from April 2008 and I am unable to define specific key service objectives until this decision is reached.

3. Meeting Key Service Objectives 2008/09

3.1 Key Themes Objectives

Objective
Review Whistle Blowing Policy and literature.
Review all existing internal & external Key Partner Protocols.
Deliver bespoke Fraud Awareness training upon request to individual services within the Council.
Continue with the growth and development of CAFT's internet & intranet sites including a page of Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)
Review the joint working strategy between CAFT and the Communications Team.
Advance into the field of financial investigations and money laundering.

3.2 Priority Improvement Initiatives

Initiative	Target Date	Completion Date	Lead
Review Whistle Blowing Policy and literature			
Review Whistle Blowing Policy contained in the Counter Fraud Framework along with accompanying literature i.e. whistle blowing leaflet, poster etc.	Quarter 1		CAFT Management Team.

	requirement basis and this facility will be raised and promoted throughout the year.			
	Initiative	Target Date	Completion Date	Lead
	Continue with the growth and development of CAFT's internet & intranet sites including a page on Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs).			
	<p>Continue to work with the Corporate Governance's Performance and Organisational Development Team in the growth and progression of CAFT's internet and intranet sites.</p> <p>Develop a CAFT Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) page to address common enquiries.</p> <p>Work with the Intelligence & Performance Team in promoting quality referrals to CAFT.</p>	<p>Ongoing throughout 08/09 and in continuation with the 07/08 initiatives.</p> <p>"The main objective is promoting 'the legal, constitutional, and ethical responsibilities of members and officers, enhancing transparency, clarity and probity of decision making and promoting best governance"</p>		<p>Jeff Lustig, Dorne Kanareck & Ann Rafferty.</p>

Initiative	Target Date	Completion Date	Lead
Review the joint working strategy between CAFT and the Communications Team			
Review the joint working strategy between CAFT and the Communications Team. Ensure the effectiveness of the strategy in publicising CAFT and its role within the Council's community and with its partners.	Ongoing		CAFT Management Team.
Set up regular quarterly liaison meetings between CAFT and Communications and invite internal/external partners to attend. Ensuring the promotion and recognition of joint working operations.	Ongoing, first meeting to be arranged for Quarter 1		CAFT Management Team.
Promotion of the Whistle Blowing and Fraud Hotline telephone facility.	Quarter 2/3		CAFT Management Team.
Organisation of Staff Open Day for 08-09	Quarter 3		CAFT Management Team.

	Initiative	Target Date	Completion Date	Lead
	Advance into the field of financial investigations and money laundering.			
	<p>The CAFT have invested in quality training with the Asset Recovery Agency in the field of Financial Investigations during 2007/08. During 2008/09 specific Investigators and members of the CAFT Management Team will complete a Performance Development Portfolio (PDP) and become Accredited Financial Investigators.</p> <p>Ensuring that CAFT are equipped with the knowledge, understanding, skills and behaviours needed to manage financial intelligence and investigations in relation to confiscation and money laundering.</p>	Quarter 3/4		CAFT Management Team.

3.3 Risk	Local Objective	Risk	Likelihood (H, M, L)	Impact (H, M, L)	Mitigating Action	Lead Officer
Priority Improvement Initiative Risks						
	Review Whistle Blowing Policy and literature.	The Whistle Blowing Policy remains stagnant, becomes ineffective and staff lose confidence and trust in the Whistle Blowing system.	L	H	<p>The Whistle Blowing Policy is on CAFT's intranet page and it is a comprehensive document that makes up part of the Counter Fraud Framework.</p> <p>The Policy is reviewed on how the procedures work in practice and we ensure that seminars on Whistle Blowing law and policy are attended and details disseminated to all relevant parties.</p>	CAFT Management Team
	Review all existing internal & external key Partner Protocols.	Protocols remain stagnant and do not address existing and future working arrangements.	L	M	Quarterly Liaison meetings between CAFT and its existing Internal & key partners. All meetings will be documented.	CAFT Management Team

	Deliver bespoke Fraud Awareness training upon request to individual services within the Council.	Inability to provide the training programme across the Authority due to lack of knowledge and skills.	L	H	Develop skills within the team to increase the number of facilitators who can deliver the training.	CAFT Management Team
	Continue with the growth and development of CAFT's internet & intranet sites including a page on FAQs.	Information on the internet and intranet is outdated and may not address or cover current issues.	L	M	Representatives from CAFT are working with the Corporate Governance Performance and Organisation Development Team on updating the Corporate Governance web sites.	CAFT Management Team & POD
	Review the joint working strategy between CAFT and the Communications Team.	Council's position or reputation damaged or compromised by poor publicity.	L	H	Regular quarterly meetings being arranged between CAFT and Communications, ensuring that accurate information is promoted and published.	CAFT Management Team
	Advance into the field of financial investigations and money laundering.	Failure to pass and attain an accreditation in financial investigations	M	M	The staff who are involved in this process have a personal mentor allocated by the Asset Recovery Agency to coach and steer	CAFT Management Team

		through non completion of the Performance Development Portfolios.			them through this new challenge.	
3.4 Equalities	<p>The London Borough of Barnet has an Equalities Policy that is monitored and regularly reviewed which CAFT ensure is implemented and promoted within our service. Our Annual Workplan will have no adverse impact or diversity issues.</p> <p>The CAFT is committed to promoting equality, challenging discrimination and developing community cohesion. This will be demonstrated through the Annual Workplan and our Service delivery Plan.</p> <p>The CAFT have worked closely with the Benefits Service in ensuring that forms and leaflets have been modified and adapted so that all members of the community, especially vulnerable groups, have an understanding of the services provided, thus reducing the likelihood of intentional or other fraud being committed.</p> <p>The CAFT offer a free translation service to everyone who attend interviews to ensure that all members of the community have equality of access and understanding. Investigation cases in CAFT are reviewed by the CAFT management to ensure compliance with Barnet's Equality Policy.</p>					
4. Workforce Planning						
4.1 Learning & Development	<p>CAFT have a service specific Learning & Development Plan that links into the Corporate Governance Training Plan.</p> <p>CAFT will develop bespoke training upon request for specific service area requirements.</p> <p>CAFT will continue to deliver the Fraud Awareness and Education programme through the authority and to its partners.</p> <p>CAFT are committed to continued staff development, encouraging secondment opportunities both within the team and in other service areas.</p> <p>Members of the CAFT Management Team are participating in a Corporate Governance Management Development Programme. This will equip managers with the skills needed to operate in a more flexible and ever changing dynamic environment.</p>					