

Counter fraud policy and strategy

Bradford Metropolitan District Council is wholly opposed to all forms of fraud, corruption or theft, both from within the council and from external sources, as fraud is bad for the economy and can adversely impact on the provision of public services for the citizens of Bradford.

The council will develop an anti-fraud culture which reinforces the council's zero tolerance of fraud, corruption and theft and actively engages all those in the Bradford district, who have a responsibility in the combating of fraud, corruption and theft against the council e.g. council employees, council members, suppliers and contractors of the council and the citizens of Bradford.

The council will deliver the highest standards of probity, honesty, integrity and accountability, to protect public funds and will actively seek to deter and prevent fraud, corruption and theft and ensure that all possible risks are minimised.

The council will ensure that, where fraud, corruption or theft is suspected or detected, it is thoroughly investigated and any proven cases dealt with consistently and proportionally, applying appropriate sanctions and/or redress for any loss.



Our values

The culture of the council is one of honesty, which opposes all forms of fraud, corruption and theft. The council will comply with all relevant legislation and guidance and ensure consistency, fairness and objectivity in the prevention, detection and investigation of fraud, corruption and theft. The council will ensure that anyone suspected of fraud, corruption or theft is treated in accordance with council policies.

The council will be transparent and accountable through its reporting arrangements.

The policy will be delivered in four strategic objectives:

Objective 1: we will raise awareness

We will raise awareness of fraud and how to report it amongst Bradford residents, council employees and council members.

The council will improve staff awareness of the risk of fraud, corruption and /or theft including how and to whom it should be reported, by regular communications, through internal newsletters and the Corporate Fraud section of the council's internal website. Additionally regular training / awareness sessions will be delivered by the most appropriate method which will include desk based e-learning and dedicated training sessions.

The council will improve awareness amongst the citizens of Bradford by ensuring the external website has clear and easily accessible information on how to report suspicions of fraud, corruption and/or theft.

The council will provide a dedicated confidential fraud hotline enabling citizens or council employees to report suspicions of fraud, corruption and /or theft and will also provide the facility for suspicions of fraud to be reported online.

The council will work with Commissioning & Procurement to ensure that all contractors and suppliers of the Council are made aware of the council's stance on fraud and their responsibilities.

Objective 2: we will take preventative action

We will aim to prevent fraud through improved systems and controls. Working with internal audit, council managers and policy makers to ensure all new policies and procedures are suitably fraud proof.

The council will ensure that appropriate and necessary controls are in place to prevent fraud, corruption and /or theft from the outset.

This will include ensuring that all applications for benefits, grants, discounts, loans, exemptions, payments, reliefs and allowances are suitably verified and where appropriate, reviewed regularly and that applications include a declaration which advises the applicant of the consequences of failing to declare their true circumstances and/or reporting any change in circumstances. This will also apply to council employee recruitment.

The council will use intelligence functionality to compare data across council departments preventing frauds or irregularities that may otherwise go undetected. This regular electronic matching of data allows for a quicker response to new areas of fraud and focuses on preventing them before they enter the system. Additionally the Council will undertake data matching exercises with external bodies where legislation permits.

Objective 3: we will work with partners

We will work with key partners including the Police, Department for Work & Pensions, HM Revenues & Customs, other local authorities, social landlords and district partners.

In combating fraud, corruption and theft, the council will work in partnership with government departments and organisations, other councils, the National Anti Fraud Network, social landlords, district partners, the Police and any other appropriate enforcement agencies.

A key partner is Kirklees Council who are contracted to provide the necessary investigation resources to assist the council in any financial investigations necessary under the Proceeds of Crime Act.

Objective 4: we will take action when fraud is found

We will promptly investigate allegations of fraud, corruption and/or theft and in proven cases apply appropriate sanctions and recover money or assets.

The council has a dedicated and fully resourced Corporate Fraud team consisting of appropriately trained counter fraud staff who will investigate suspicions of fraud, corruption and /or theft, referred to them, in addition to investigating discrepancies uncovered through the risk - based proactive work.

The council will apply appropriate sanctions for individuals or organisations where an investigation reveals fraud, corruption and /or theft have taken place. Such sanctions will include criminal and/or civil proceedings through the courts and/or disciplinary action, where appropriate. All sanctions will be applied in accordance with the council's sanctions policy.

In addition the council will seek financial redress and rigorously pursue the recovery of any monies gained through fraud, corruption and /or theft.

The council will regularly, for transparency and by way of a deterrent, publicise the results of all investigation work, including successful sanctions and any recovery of losses due to fraud, corruption and /or theft.

Key enablers

Dedicated and
professionally
qualified Corporate
Fraud team

Intelligence and
data matching

Performance
reporting

www.bradford.gov.uk/reportfraud