



COUNTER FRAUD POLICY STATEMENT

Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council (the Council) is committed to the principles of good governance and recognises the importance of operating in an open and accountable manner, whilst demonstrating high standards of conduct. The Council expects all its stakeholders (including its councillors, employees, partners and contractors) to act honestly, with integrity and to safeguard the public purse. The Council does not accept any fraud or corruption and any identified case will be thoroughly investigated and appropriately dealt with.

The Council is committed to ensuring that opportunities for fraud and corruption are reduced to the lowest possible level through a combination of:

- **Govern** – having robust arrangements and executive support to ensure anti- fraud, bribery and corruption measures are embedded throughout the organisation;
- **Acknowledge** - acknowledging and understanding fraud risks, and the harm they cause to the organisation, its objectives and service users, and committing support and resource to tackling fraud in order to maintain a robust anti-fraud response;
- **Prevent** - preventing and detecting fraud by making better use of information and technology, enhancing fraud controls and processes and developing a more effective anti-fraud culture; and
- **Pursue** - punishing fraudsters and recovering losses by prioritising the use of civil sanctions, developing capability and capacity to investigate fraudsters and developing a more collaborative and supportive law enforcement response.
- **Protect** - recognising the harm that fraud can cause in the community. Protecting itself and its residents from fraud.

To achieve this, the Council will:

Govern

- Put in place a policy framework which supports the implementation of the counter fraud strategy.
- Set the 'tone from the top' by acknowledging the responsibility of the governing body for countering fraud and corruption.
- Communicate counter fraud arrangements throughout the Council and making them publically available to demonstrate the culture and commitment to preventing fraud.

Acknowledge:

- Ensure that all Council stakeholders understand that fraud is unacceptable.
- Clarify roles and responsibilities in relation to fraud.
- Identify, assess and review areas of greatest fraud risk.
- Enable managers to identify and mitigate fraud risks.
- Use the capacity and capability available effectively to investigate and prosecute fraud.

Prevent:

- Promote a culture of zero tolerance for fraud and corruption.
- Provide access to rules and procedures, which stakeholders will be expected to follow.
- Design and operate systems, rules and procedures, which minimise the risk of fraud.
- Increase awareness of fraud and corruption through a programme of training and communication.
- Encourage and enable stakeholders to raise serious concerns.
- Proactively seek out and follow up instances of potential fraud.

- Publicise cases to demonstrate success in fighting fraud.

Pursue:

- Formally investigate allegations of suspected fraud and corruption.
- Apply appropriate sanctions such as disciplinary action, criminal proceedings and recovery of losses when necessary, working with other organisations to achieve this.
- Seek redress for frauds, overpayments and losses.

Protect:

- Protect the Council from fraud, cyber-crime and future frauds through sharing intelligence with partner agencies and other local authorities, working within the law.

This policy will be implemented through the operation of the Council's Counter Fraud Strategy.

Signed:

Leader

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Chief Executive

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**Chair of Audit &
Governance Committee**