



BURNTWOOD TOWN COUNCIL

ANTI-FRAUD AND CORRUPTION POLICY

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1.0 Commitment

- 1.1 The Council is committed to the prevention, deterrence, detection and investigation of all forms of fraud and corruption.

2.0 Definition

- 2.1 Fraud is defined as the illicit gaining of cash or other benefits by deception. Corruption is defined as the dishonest influencing of actions and decisions.

3.0 Culture of the Council

- 3.1 The Council will seek to maintain an environment that makes fraud and corruption difficult to perpetrate. All practicable steps will be taken to minimise the risk and effect of fraud and corruption by its customers, clients, elected Members or employees across the whole range of the Council's services and functions. The need for appropriate controls is acknowledged and the Council will seek to sustain such controls in the administrative, financial, operational and computer systems employed in the delivery of external and internal services and management.
- 3.2 It is the responsibility of the Town Clerk to ensure that there are appropriate and adequate controls in place within the systems for which he/she is responsible, working in conjunction with the Finance Officer (as Responsible Financial Officer). The Council expects that current recommended best practice will always be followed. Controls will be designed to deter, prevent and detect all forms of fraud and corruption and also identify a clear pathway for investigation.
 - 3.3.1 The Council expects all of its suppliers, contractors, agents, partner organisations and individuals, to act with honesty and integrity, and client officers will be responsible for monitoring their actions and for ensuring that their terms of reference, agreements and/or contracts include a clause to that effect. The Council will seek to ensure that all its dealings will be conducted on the same basis and expects its members and employees to lead by example.
 - 3.3.2 The Council recognises the principles of good enforcement (as set down in the Regulators' Code of April 2014) and the enforcement of the law by the Council will follow the principles of proportionality enshrined in Human Rights legislation. In applying the law and securing compliance the Council will be consistent and transparent in the way it operates.
- 3.5 The Council will maintain a framework of guidance, codes of practice, codes of conduct and procedures designed to ensure that its objectives are achieved in a proper and fair manner. All cases of fraud and corruption will be investigated and treated equally, regardless of the perpetrator. The police will be informed if appropriate. Disciplinary action will be taken, as necessary, in accordance with the Council's disciplinary procedures.

3.6 The Council wishes to encourage any interested party, whether they are elected Members, employees, taxpayers, clients, or customers, to report any suspicions of fraud or corruption that they may have. Concerns can be registered in several ways. Members of the public can raise concerns through the Council's Complaints Procedure. Employees can raise concerns with the Town Clerk or via the Council's Confidential Reporting Policy. Concerns can also be raised directly with whoever of the following is the most appropriate or convenient and they will then ensure that the matter is dealt with in accordance with the Council's policies and procedures:

- The Chairman of the Council, the Leader of the Council or a Ward Councillor.
- The Town Clerk.
- The Internal Auditor or the Council's external auditors.

3.7 The Council's Confidential Reporting Policy seeks to reassure employees that there will be no victimisation of internal "whistleblowers" and that every effort will be made to ensure anonymity if employees so wish. All information received will be given due and careful consideration. There is of course a need to ensure that procedures for reporting and investigating suspected fraud or corruption are not misused.

4.0 Members' Role and Responsibilities

4.1 As elected representatives of the public, Council Members have a duty to be fair, honest and open in their roles. Members must abide by legislation, the Council's Code of Conduct, the Council's Standing Orders and Financial Regulations and the Council's locally adopted policies and procedures.

4.2 Members are required to declare and register any pecuniary interests they may have in companies, charitable organisations, voluntary groups or other relevant organisations. Members are required to abstain from any debate or vote which pertains to matters involving any such organisations in which they have a pecuniary interest and in certain cases when they have a non-pecuniary private or personal interest.

5.0 Employees' Role and Responsibilities

5.1 All employees are expected to comply with the Council's Code of Conduct. Employees who are members of professional bodies will also be expected to abide by any codes of conduct and/or professional ethics issued by those bodies. All employees are subject to their terms and conditions of employment. Job descriptions, procedure notes and managerial instructions define the role of employees on a day-to-day basis. Employees must ensure that they work within the Council's Standing Orders and Financial Regulations. Where the Council uses agency staff, they will be bound by the same rules as direct Council employees.

5.2 The Town Clerk and Finance Officer are responsible for ensuring that all staff are aware of the Council's Financial Regulations and that the requirements of these rules are being met. The Town Clerk is also responsible for ensuring that:

- Appropriate procedures are in place to safeguard the resources for which they are responsible.
- All employees are complying with the relevant codes of conduct.
- All complaints are logged and that details of subsequent actions and decisions are recorded.

6.0 Town Clerk and Finance Officer's Role and Responsibilities

6.1 The Town Clerk and the Finance Officer (as the Council's Responsible Financial Officer) have a statutory duty to ensure that proper arrangements are made to administer the Council's finances and financial systems. The Council acknowledges these roles, supports the Town Clerk and Finance Officer in undertaking their approved duties and will consider their advice on any changes to the systems of control, financial administration and associated rules and regulations.

6.2.1 The Town Clerk and Finance Officer are responsible for the prevention, detection and resolution of fraud and irregularities. In compliance with these requirements, the Finance Officer shall ensure appropriate Internal Audit provision and shall ensure complimentary operation with External Audit in all cases.

7.0 Investigation and Detection

7.1 The Council maintains a proactive attitude to the prevention and detection of all forms of fraud and corruption using:

- management controls
- Internal Audit, in accordance with an agreed code of conduct
- other specialist resources
- relevant external agencies

7.2 All reported or suspected occurrences of fraud and corruption will be investigated in a fair, proper and open manner.

7.3 The Council is committed to being actively involved with any appropriate joint initiatives designed to prevent and detect fraud and corruption.