

## Cabinet 21 November 2012

### Report of the Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee: Joint National Fraud Initiative Strategy (Nov12/15)

- (1) The National Fraud Initiative (NFI) is a data matching exercise which involves the comparison of information held by and between around 1,300 organisations, with the objective of detecting and preventing fraud and error. St Edmundsbury Borough Council and Forest Heath District Council collect and use many different types of data from a wide variety of sources, and this joint strategy replaces the strategy currently in place at St Edmundsbury, produced in 2008, and is the first such strategy for Forest Heath.
- (2) Since the introduction of the data matching service, participation in the NFI has become mandatory. The strategy aims to define the key roles and responsibilities of all stakeholders involved with the NFI exercise to ensure that fair processing and compliance is maintained, mandatory data sets are correctly provided and investigations are undertaken as necessary, based on the associated risks.
- (3) The strategy also sets out the key activities and responsibilities of officers in relation to the follow-up of matched reports and reporting progress on the investigation of errors and potential frauds, and aims to provide a means of ensuring staff have the correct knowledge, understanding and support in order to discharge their NFI roles and responsibilities.
- (4) The Committee **RECOMMENDED, that:**
  - (1) **the Joint National Fraud Initiative Strategy between St Edmundsbury Borough Council and Forest Heath District Council, as set out in Appendix A to Report D181, be recommended for approval through full Council, subject to the consideration of any recommendations for amendment proposed by Forest Heath District Council; and**
  - (2) **the Internal Audit Manager be given delegated authority to update information on NFI Outcomes (paragraph 1.4) and Data Leads (paragraph 7.3) within the Strategy, as appropriate.**

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Scrutiny Cttee - Joint National Fraud Initiative (NFI) Strategy.doc