

**COMMITTEE:** Audit and Governance Committee

**MEETING DATE:** 24 March 2026

**BY:** Service Manager – Internal Audit

**REPORT TITLE:** Counter Fraud Annual Plan 2026/27

**REPORT STATUS:** Public

## **1 PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 To inform the Audit and Governance Committee of Counter Fraud operational plan for 2026/27.

## **2 RECOMMENDATIONS**

Members are recommended to:

- 2.1 The Audit and Governance Committee is asked to approve the Counter Fraud Plan for 2026/27.

## **3 BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 The purpose of this report is to gain approval from the Audit Committee for the proposed Counter Fraud Annual Plan 2026/27. In accordance with the Council's Counter Fraud Policy & Strategy as approved by Cabinet in May 2026.
- 3.2 The Counter Fraud Annual Plan 2026/27 (Appendix 1) sets out the planned counter fraud activity to support the approach and culture of the Council in tackling fraud, bribery and corruption. This will enable the Council to demonstrate commitment to tackling fraud and reflects the Council's assessment of counter fraud controls.
- 3.3 Having robust fraud risk management prevention and investigation arrangements in place contributes to safeguarding the Council's financial resources, for delivery of services, as part of protecting public funding. A focus on enhancing fraud prevention and detection to improve East

Lothian Council's resilience to the risk of fraud, theft, corruption and crime, and ensure these are embedded preventative practices.

3.4 The Counter Fraud Officers key areas of fraud investigation are identified within the Counter Fraud Annual Plan, being:

- Completion of National Fraud Initiative Investigations, and coordinating responses from other Council services;
- Reviewing Whistleblowing and social housing enquiries and completing investigations when appropriate; and
- Completing Fraud Risk Assessments in order to improve the preventative controls within the Council
- Fraud Investigation Training and Awareness. Deliver targeted fraud investigation training to strengthen staff understanding and improve early detection.

#### 4 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

4.1 None

#### 5 RESOURCE AND OTHER IMPLICATIONS

5.1 Finance: None

5.2 Human Resources: None

5.3 Other (e.g. Legal/IT): None

5.4 Risk: None

#### 6 INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT

6.1 **Select the statement that is appropriate to your report by placing an 'X' in the relevant box.**

An Integrated Impact Assessment screening process has been undertaken and the subject of this report does not affect the wellbeing of the community or have a significant impact on: equality and human rights; tackling socio-economic disadvantages and poverty; climate change, the environment and sustainability; the Council's role as a corporate parent; or the storage/collection of personal data.



or

The subject of this report has been through the Integrated Impact Assessment process and impacts have been identified as follows:



Subject	Impacts identified (Yes, No or N/A)
Equality and human rights	
Socio-economic disadvantage/poverty	
Climate change, the environment and sustainability	
Corporate parenting and care-experienced young people	
Storage/collection of personal data	
Other	

The Integrated Impact Assessment relating to this report has been published and can be accessed via the Council's website:

[https://www.eastlothian.gov.uk/info/210602/equality\\_and\\_diversity/12014/integrated\\_impact\\_assessments](https://www.eastlothian.gov.uk/info/210602/equality_and_diversity/12014/integrated_impact_assessments)

## 7 APPENDICES

- 7.1 East Lothian Council Counter Fraud Annual Plan 2026/27 (attached)

## 8 BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 8.1 None

## 9 AUTHOR AND APPROVAL DETAILS

### Report Author(s)

<b>Name</b>	<b>Duncan Stainbank</b>
<b>Designation</b>	<b>Service Manager – Internal Audit</b>
<b>Tel/Email</b>	dstainbank@eastlothian.gov.uk
<b>Date</b>	<b>13 March 2026</b>

**Head of Service Approval**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Duncan Stainbank</b>
<b>Designation</b>	<b>Service Manager – Internal Audit</b>
<b>Confirmation that IIA and other relevant checks (e.g. finance/legal) have been completed</b>	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Approval Date</b>	<b>13 March 2026</b>



Ref	Category	Activity	Number of Days	Commentary
1.	Compliance	Corporate Fraud Enquiries	30	Respond to whistleblowing notifications.
2.	Data Match	National Fraud Initiative	50	Co-ordinate the NFI exercise across Council services, manage and coordinate the provision of data to the NFI national exercise for 2026/27, commence review of the 2026/27 matches when available. Continue to finalise investigations on the 2024/25 exercise for Council tax recheck and small number of open investigation matches.
3.	Compliance	Social Housing	45	Social Housing enquiries and investigations.
4.	Compliance	Council Tax	25	Council Tax enquiries and investigations.
5.	Other	Corporate Fraud Policy Framework	10	Review the Council policies and procedures, update and arrange council wide communication as appropriate.
6.	Other	Fraud Risk Assessments	20	Update the Council wide fraud risk assessment supported by the CLT and operational Service Managers to assess fraud risks and develop improved mitigating controls as required by the UK government guidance on the Crime of Failure to Prevent Fraud.
7.	Other	Training	10	Deliver targeted fraud investigation training to strengthen staff understanding and improve early detection, to specific teams across the Council
8.	Governance	Integrity Group and Audit & Governance Preparation and Attendance	10	Preparation and attendance at Governance and management groups monitoring Corporate Fraud Progress.
<b>Corporate Fraud Total</b>			<b>200</b>	