

MIDDLESBROUGH COUNCIL	
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Report of:	Head of Internal Audit, Veritau
Submitted to:	Audit Committee
Date:	12 December 2024
Title:	Internal Audit and Counter Fraud Progress Report
Report for:	Information
Status:	Public
Council Plan priority:	Delivering Best Value

Executive summary	
<p>This report provides the committee with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • an update on internal audit and counter fraud work undertaken. 	

1. Purpose

1.1 To provide Members with an update on the delivery of internal audit and counter fraud work and on reports issued and other work completed since the last update to the committee.

2. Recommendations

2.1 That the Audit Committee

- Notes the latest update on internal audit and counter fraud work.

3. Background and relevant information

3.1 Internal audit provides independent and objective assurance and advice on the Council's operations. It helps the organisation to achieve overall objectives by bringing a systematic, disciplined approach to the evaluation and improvement of the effectiveness of risk management, control and governance processes.

3.2 The work of internal audit is governed by the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 and relevant professional standards. These include the Public Sector Internal Audit Standards (PSIAS), CIPFA guidance on the application of those standards in Local Government and the CIPFA Statement on the role of the Head of Internal Audit.

3.3 Fraud is a significant risk to the public sector. Annual losses are estimated as being as high as £59 billion in the United Kingdom. Veritau are engaged to deliver a counter fraud service for Middlesbrough Council. The service helps the Council to mitigate fraud risks and to take appropriate action where fraud is suspected.

3.4 The purpose of this report is to provide an update on internal audit and counter fraud work carried out in 2024/25. The Council’s internal audit and counter fraud work programmes were approved by this Committee in July 2024.

Internal Audit Progress report

3.5 The internal audit progress report is contained in appendix 1. This includes a summary of current work in progress, internal audit priorities for the year, completed work, and follow-up of previously agreed audit actions.

Counter Fraud Progress report

3.6 The counter fraud progress report is contained in appendix 2. A range of work is detailed including activity to promote awareness of fraud, work with external agencies, and the result of investigative work undertaken for the Council.

4. Other potential alternative(s) and why these have not been recommended

4.1 This report is for information. There are no other options available.

5. Impact(s) of the recommended decision(s)

Topic	Impact
Financial (including procurement and Social Value)	There are no specific impacts or implications.
Legal	There are no specific impacts or implications.
Risk	There are no specific impacts or implications.
Human Rights, Public Sector Equality Duty and Community Cohesion	There are no specific impacts or implications.
Climate Change / Environmental	There are no specific impacts or implications.
Children and Young People Cared for by the Authority and Care Leavers	There are no specific impacts or implications.
Data Protection	There are no specific impacts or implications.

Appendices

1	Internal Audit Progress Report December 2024
2	Counter Fraud Progress Report December 2024

Background papers

Body	Report title	Date
n/a	n/a	n/a

Contact: Phil Jeffrey
Email: phil.jeffrey@veritau.co.uk

Contact: Jonathan Dodsworth
Email: jonathan.dodsworth@veritau.co.uk