Keeping the Council safe from fraud and corruption: a few tips from the Corporate Integrity Group

Officers from a number of different Council departments sit on the Council's Corporate Integrity Group. The group tries to improve the Council's resilience to crime, fraud and corruption by keeping an overview of current threats and the Councils policies and procedures to combat them. Here are some tips from the Group:

Be wary of telephone or email scams.

There have been a few cases recently where staff have been tricked into fraudulent phishing (email) or vishing (phone) scams.

- You could receive an email, which on the face of it looks genuine, asking you to open an attachment which could compromise the Council's IT system. Something may not quite look right about an email. So a reminder to be vigilant.
- You could be asked by a supplier to change the bank account details which we pay them through. But it may be not be the real supplier who has made the request. If in doubt phone them up to check it is them. There is further guidance from our payments section [add link].

Payments to others

Try to make sure that you have a system of checks and balances for payments to others and that more than one person is involved in a process.

Receiving gifts and conflicts of interest.

Be wary if a supplier, contractor or applicant offers you a gift, reduction or special terms. They may be trying to influence a purchase decision or regulatory process. If you are in doubt about whether you can accept a gift, speak to your manager. Make sure any gifts are declared in line with the Council's policy: http://interchange.moray.gov.uk/int_standard/Page_112699.html

Good housekeeping with confidential information.

- Keep a tidy desk, an organised filing system and make sure confidential information is secure.
- As a general rule, only people who need to know information should have access to it.
- Be careful with names, addresses and sensitive records. If you are sending out a letter, double check that you have the right addressee.
- Keep a record of what IT/records systems each staff member has access to. When you recruit make sure that adequate data protection training is given and when staff leave, make sure that you recover all equipment, ID badges and remove all system permissions and passwords.

Be mindful of building security

And a final one – try and keep your ID badge visible when you are in a council building. If you see an unfamiliar face without a badge, don't be afraid to ask them if they need help.

Make sure visitors to the building are escorted at all times, otherwise get a temporary ID badge for them.