

Counter-Fraud for data transparency

S43 of the Local Government Transparency Code 2014, requires local authorities to publish information about their counter fraud work.

The attached figures cover the period 1/4/2014 – 31/3/2015.

Number of occasions powers were used under the Prevention of Social Housing Fraud (Power to Require Information) (England) Regulations 2014, or similar powers

- Internal Audit Not used
- Revenues Not used
- Benefits Not Used
- Housing Not used

Total number (absolute and full time equivalent) of employees undertaking investigations and prosecutions of fraud

- Internal Audit
One employee (approx. 0.1 FTE) may be involved in investigations that could relate to fraud and also reviews potential fraud cases from annual National Fraud Initiative (NFI) reports received
- Benefits 1.8 Investigators. 0.3 Manager (2.1 FTE)
- Housing Ad hoc – liaison with Investigations
(A dedicated Housing Fraud Investigator post is to be progress on a trial basis in 2015)
- Legal Services 2 staff involved in prosecutions (0.04 FTE)

Total number (absolute and full time equivalent) of professionally accredited counter fraud specialists

- Internal Audit None
- Benefits 2.1
- Housing None

Total spent by the authority on the investigation and prosecution of fraud

- Internal Audit c. £5k (based upon staff time)
- Revenues c. £2k (additional review of NFI reports)
- Benefits c. £95k (staff time and legal costs)
- Housing c. £5k (proportion of staff time)
- Legal Services c. £3k (prosecutions – including external advice)

Total number of fraud cases investigated

- Internal Audit / Revenues
From the NFI reports received in February 2014 and February 2015, 1130 Council Tax Single Person Discount leads were reviewed and 67 accounts subsequently had bills altered – however, these were not formal ‘fraud’ investigations
- Benefits 188
- Housing 5
- Legal Services 3 prosecutions (resulting from investigations)

It should be noted that information on the Council's counter-fraud activities is presented to the Audit & Governance Committee in June, covering the previous financial year. A copy of this report is provided on the Data Transparency web page.