

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 1/4/2015 – 31/3/2016.

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) – *until 12/15 only, when staff transferred to the DWP SFIS (1.57 FTE for year)*
- Housing
Ad hoc – liaison with Investigations – *until 12/15*
1 Housing Fraud Investigator – *from 1/16 (0.25 FTE for year)*
- Legal Services
No prosecutions in 2015/16

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

- Internal Audit
None
- Benefits
2.1 – *until 12/15 only, when staff transferred to the DWP SFIS (1.57 FTE for year)*
- Housing
1 – *from 1/16 (0.25 FTE for year)*

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)
c. £4k (credit reference agency matching)
- Benefits
c. £95k (staff time and legal costs)
- Housing
c. £11k (proportion of staff time)

Total number of fraud cases investigated

- Internal Audit / Revenues
The Council undertook a review of Council Tax Single Person Discount entitlement in 2015, using credit reference agency data. c.800 leads were reviewed by Revenues staff and 501 accounts subsequently had bills altered – however, these were not classed as formal 'fraud' investigations

- Benefits 51
- Housing 36

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.