

COUNTER FRAUD ACTIVITY 2016/17

The table below shows the total numbers of fraud referrals received and summarises the outcomes of investigations completed during the year.

	2016/17 (Actual: Full Yr)	2016/17 (Target: Full Yr)	2015/16 (Actual: Full Yr)
% of investigations completed which resulted in a successful outcome (for example benefit stopped or amended, sanctions, prosecutions, properties recovered, housing allocations blocked, management action taken).	47%	30%	41%
Amount of actual savings (quantifiable savings - e.g. CTS) identified through fraud investigation.	£346,944	£100,000	£141,549
Amount of notional savings (estimated savings - e.g. housing tenancy fraud) identified through fraud investigation.	£144,400	£250,000	£511,000

Caseload figures for the period are:

	As at 31/3/17	As at 1/4/16
Awaiting allocation	64	10
Under investigation	105	93

Summary of counter fraud activity:

Activity	Work completed or in progress
Data matching	<p>Results from the 2016/17 National Fraud Initiative have been returned. There are over 2,600 matches to investigate covering a range of council services. Investigation of matches is underway.</p> <p>The council has joined Ryedale, Selby, Hambleton and Richmondshire district councils to undertake data matching exercises to detect cross boundary fraud. Results from a data match looking at single person discounts have been returned and matches are currently being reviewed.</p>
Fraud detection and investigation	<p>The service continues to promote the use of criminal investigation techniques and standards to respond to any fraud perpetrated against the council. Activity to date includes the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li data-bbox="465 938 2031 1107">• Social Care fraud – is a substantial risk to the council and remains an area of development for the fraud team. In 2016/17 the team identified over £216k of losses to the council in this area and helped to recover £143k. There are currently 19 ongoing social care fraud investigations.<li data-bbox="465 1158 2031 1324">• Housing fraud – Working in conjunction with housing officers, 7 properties were recovered during the last financial year. In addition, 5 properties were prevented from being let where the prospective tenants had provided false information in their housing applications. There are currently 17 ongoing investigations in this area.

Activity	Work completed or in progress
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Internal fraud - The team has received 15 referrals for internal frauds in the last financial year and 10 cases are currently under investigation. • Council Tax/Non Domestic Rates fraud – In 2016/17 the team received 74 referrals for potential fraud in this area. The council prosecuted its first Council Tax fraud case where a resident falsely claimed a Single Person Discount. Fraud or loss was uncovered in a further 15 cases. There are currently 27 ongoing investigations into Council Tax and Non Domestic Rates fraud. • York Financial Assistance Scheme fraud – The fraud team received 7 referrals in 2016/17. The council achieved its first prosecution in the area where an applicant was found to be selling goods provided by the scheme before they had been delivered. The team issued a further two cautions/warnings for offences against the scheme. There are currently 4 ongoing investigations. • Council Tax Support fraud – In the last financial year 96 referrals for potential CTS fraud were received. The team identified £27k in losses due to CTS fraud during the year. There are currently 18 cases under investigation. • Parking fraud – Alongside the Parking department, the fraud team have instituted new working practices to help combat disabled badge fraud within the city. The new arrangements have helped increase the number and quality of referrals received from enforcement officers. In 2016/17 the fraud team issued 15 warnings for disabled badge or

Activity	Work completed or in progress
	<p>parking permit misuse. There are currently 17 cases under investigation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Education verification – The fraud team works with the schools team to investigate and deter false applications for school placements. The team completed 3 investigations in 2016/17 and blocked one false application.
Fraud liaison	<p>The council's remit to investigate and prosecute housing benefit fraud transferred to the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) last year. The fraud team now acts as a single point of contact for the DWP and is responsible for providing data to support their housing benefit investigations. The team have dealt with 513 requests on behalf of the council this financial year.</p>