

COUNTER FRAUD ACTIVITY 2016/17

The table below summarises the outcomes from fraud investigation work for the period to 31 October 2016. The indicators include the full range of counter fraud work undertaken.

	2016/17 (Actual:31/10/16)	2016/17 (Target: Full Yr)	2015/16 (Actual: Full Yr)
% of investigations completed which result 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.	£121,434	£100,000	£141,579
Amount of notional savings (estimated savings - e.g. housing tenancy fraud) identified through fraud investigation.	£126,200	£250,000 ¹	£511,100

Caseload figures for the period are:

	As at 31/10/16	As at 1/4/16
Awaiting allocation	19	10
Under investigation	96	93

¹ The annual target for notional savings has been reduced from £500,000 following changes to the scope of work undertaken for the Housing Department.

Summary of counter fraud activity:

Activity	Work completed or in progress
Data matching	<p>Data for the 2016/17 National Fraud Initiative has been extracted and securely transferred to the Cabinet Office for data matching. Results of the exercise will be returned in early 2017.</p> <p>The council has joined Ryedale, Selby, Hambleton and Richmondshire district councils to undertake data matching exercises to detect cross boundary fraud. Initial matching has begun looking at single person discounts and other council tax exemptions.</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"> • Social Care fraud – is a substantial risk to the council and remains an area of development for the fraud team. To date this year the team has helped to recover £105k. There are currently 23 ongoing investigations in this area. • Housing fraud – Working in conjunction with housing officers, 5 properties have been recovered to date in 2016/17. In addition, 3 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. • Internal fraud - The team has received 6 referrals for internal frauds in 2016/17, and 7 cases are currently under investigation.

Activity	Work completed or in progress
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="472 379 2051 544">• Council Tax/Non Domestic Rates fraud – This area is the subject of cross boundary data matching to detect fraud. To date in 2016/17 the team has received 15 referrals for potential fraud in this area. There are currently 12 ongoing investigations into Council Tax and Non Domestic Rates fraud. <li data-bbox="472 600 2051 719">• York Financial Assistance Scheme fraud – To date the fraud team has received 4 referrals in 2016/17. This year the team achieved its first prosecution. It has also issued two cautions/warnings. <li data-bbox="472 775 2051 895">• Council Tax Support fraud – The council is responsible for the investigation of council tax support payments. The team has identified £5,4k in loss due to CTRS fraud to date. There are currently 12 cases under investigation. <li data-bbox="472 951 2051 1118">• Parking fraud – Alongside the Parking department, the team are currently looking at how other authorities deal with blue badge fraud and are prioritising closer working arrangements and proactive exercises. This financial year the team has issued 4 warnings for disabled badge misuse. There are currently 8 cases under investigation. <li data-bbox="472 1174 2051 1286">• Education verification – The fraud team works with the schools team to investigate and deter false applications for school placements. The team have received two referrals to date in 2016/17.

Activity	Work completed or in progress
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li data-bbox="472 336 2049 544">• Benefit fraud – On 1 March 2016 the council's remit to investigate and prosecute housing benefit fraud transferred to the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP). 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 365 requests on behalf of the council this financial year.