

## Annex 4

### Investigations, Prosecutions and Sanctions (Housing and Council Tax Benefits) 2007/08

876 fraud referrals were received in the year (2006/07 – 1,131), which represents a decrease of 23% on the previous year. 356 of these cases were passed for investigation (41%). The decrease in referrals is principally due to the suspension of HMBS data matches between October 2007 and March 2008 (see Annex 3). The following table summarises performance during the year.

	<b>2007/08 Actual</b>	<b>2007/08 Target</b>	<b>2006/07 Actual</b>
Number of fraud investigations completed	524	540	539
Prosecutions	20	19	22
Administrative Penalties	14	20	15
Cautions	14	20	14

In addition to the above, the Fraud team has investigated 22 cases of suspected blue badge fraud. The investigations have led to 10 cases being referred to the police for further action.

Although the number of prosecutions has exceeded the target for the year, the number of sanctions achieved (cautions and administrative penalties) is below the level expected. This is in part due to the Fraud Team Leader post being vacant for several months, which led to a backlog of cases awaiting decision on action to be taken. Although a new Team Leader was appointed in January 2008, the backlog of cases was not addressed before the end of the year and this has affected the number of sanctions administered. The total number of investigations completed has also been affected by the vacancy, and by long term sickness within the team.

Performance of the fraud team is also measured and reported through three statutory Best Value Performance Indicators. The outturn for 2007/08 is as follows.

	<b>2007/08 Actual</b>	<b>2007/08 Target</b>	<b>2006/07 Actual</b>	<b>Comments</b>
BVPI 76b – Number of investigators per 1000 caseload	0.49	0.50	0.51	There were no changes in the Fraud Team establishment during the year. There has been a slight decrease in this indicator due to a rise in benefit claimants (up by approximately 0.3% on 2006/07).
BVPI 76c – Number of investigations completed per 1000 caseload	43.2	45	44.59	This indicator is slightly lower than expected due to the increase in benefit claimants. However, the number of investigations completed has also been affected by vacancies within the team, and long term sickness.
BVPI 76d – Number of sanctions/prosecutions per 1000 caseload	3.96	5	4.22	As noted above, the shortfall in this indicator is principally due to the backlog of cases awaiting decision in year, caused by the vacancy in the Team Leader post.