

COUNTER FRAUD ACTIVITY 2010/11

The table below shows the total numbers of investigations completed, sanctions applied, fraudulent overpayments identified by the counter fraud team to date. The table also shows performance against agreed targets (as at 31 October):

	2010/11 Actual to date	2010/11 Target	2009/10 Actual
Number of Benefit Fraud referrals received (excluding HBMS). <i>The target is designed to promote fraud awareness and encourage people to report suspected fraud.</i>	247	400 referrals to be received	391
% of referrals which are investigated (excluding HBMS). <i>The target is designed to measure the quality of referrals received and the capacity of the counter fraud team to investigate cases.</i>	51%	60% of referrals investigated	51%
% of investigations completed which result in a positive outcome (benefit stopped or amended, sanction or prosecution). <i>The target is designed to measure the effectiveness of counter fraud activity</i>	49%	25% of those cases which are investigated to result in a positive outcome	35%
Value of fraudulent overpayments identified. <i>The target is designed to measure the effectiveness of counter fraud activity</i>	£209K	£350k of overpayments to be identified	£340k
Number of investigations completed	405	N/A	327
Number of sanctions / prosecutions	18	N/A	44

The relevant caseload figures for the period are:

	As at 1/4/10	As at 31/10/10
Awaiting allocation	174	62
Under investigation	237	294

Summary of counter fraud activity:

Activity	Work Completed or in Progress
Data Matching	Data was submitted for the National Fraud Initiative at the beginning of October. Information on positive matches should be received by the end of the financial year. Housing Benefit Matching Service (HBMS) referrals continue to be investigated - the counter fraud team has received 504 HBMS referrals to date in 2010/11. The total value of benefit overpayments identified through HBMS matches since 1 April 2010 is £146k.
Fraud Detection and Investigation	<p>As in previous years, the majority of investigations undertaken relate to benefit fraud.</p> <p>The investigation of housing tenancy related fraud through the Operation Red Card initiative is also ongoing. 76 referrals have been received from the public and from other council staff since the initiative began in April, and around a quarter of these are currently under investigation. Two properties have been recovered from tenants since April 2010.</p> <p>Joint working with other teams remains a priority for the service. So far this year 28% of sanctions and prosecutions are the result of joint working with the DWP. Other initiatives include a joint exercise with the police and taxi licensing officers involving random checks on Hackney Carriage and private hire drivers.</p> <p>The team continues to undertake other special investigations (including internal fraud) and</p>

Activity	Work Completed or in Progress
	provide advice to council departments on fraud matters. 14 referrals have been received so far in 2010/11, and a number of investigations are ongoing.
Fraud Awareness	<p>Ongoing activity includes publication of successful prosecutions through the local press, other internal and external publicity, and feedback on the results of fraud investigations to council officers to improve the quality of referrals and to put in place appropriate controls to prevent and detect fraud.</p> <p>An e-learning fraud awareness package is due to be rolled out to council officers in the next few months. In addition, a number of targeted fraud awareness training sessions will be delivered in quarter 4.</p>