

**Annex 5
Counter Fraud Activity**

| Activity | Work Completed during 2006/07 |
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| Training | The source and type of fraud referrals received has continued to be monitored through the year. This has influenced the fraud awareness training delivered to Benefits and Housing staff, including new starters. A desktop e-learning training programme was also made available to all staff in Revenues, Benefits, ARM together with relevant teams in Housing. |
| Public and Internal Fraud Awareness | The service has maintained a good profile in the local press with regular articles following successful court cases. A targeted publicity programme to raise staff and public awareness was delivered in March 2007. The programme included a series of press advertisements and articles, together with the distribution of posters to public buildings and local businesses. Referrals from the public increased by more than 250% during March and April as a result. |
| Advice and Guidance | Advice and guidance has been provided on the design and implementation of measures to prevent and detect fraud and other financial irregularities. Examples include changes to the design of benefit claim forms and the implementation of security measures in Council establishments and offices. Feedback is now given to relevant staff on all cases investigated. This feedback is intended to encourage more referrals but, where necessary, will include recommendations to change or improve systems and procedures so as to prevent or detect fraud in the future. Procedures have also been developed to strengthen the arrangements across the Council to prevent and detect money laundering. |
| Data Matching | Work during the year has been concentrated on coordinating the collection and despatch of data for the Audit Commission's National Fraud Initiative. The results from this exercise are currently being investigated. In addition, the Fraud team has continued to investigate potential benefit fraud cases identified each month by the DWP through the HBMS data match process. During |

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| | <p>2006/07, 593 data matches were received from the DWP. These matches were reviewed and 247 were passed for more detailed investigation. In addition, the Fraud team are now using data interrogation software to identify potential high risk groups of benefit claimants so as to inform the future work of both the Fraud and Interventions teams.</p> |
| <p>Joint Working with Other Agencies</p> | <p>The Fraud Partnership Agreement (FPA) with the DWP which encourages and facilitates joint working on relevant cases is now fully operational and is proving to be very successful. Both agencies are cooperating on individual investigations and sharing information to identify further possible fraud. Where appropriate the Fraud team has also continued taken part in specific joint exercises with other agencies. For example, the Fraud team took part in a joint exercise with the DWP, police and trading standards to identify counterfeit traders at a car boot sale.</p> |
| <p>Other</p> | <p>The Council's Fraud and Prosecution Policy was reviewed and a revised Policy was approved at Corporate Services EMAP on 12 September 2006. The new Policy became effective from 1 October 2006.</p> |