

Fraud End of Year Report April 2022 - March 2023

Appendix A, statistics; outcomes closed investigations 2022/23

Sara Essex, Counter Fraud Manager

1. Antifraud culture - the wider picture

Fraud will always be a risk, and the risk is greater if it is not recognised by the services, or if there is no accountability or responsibility taken by managers. Staff are our most valuable resource and the first defence against fraud.

2. Fraud Prevention

The fraud prevention ilearn training module (updated May 2022) gives an overview of fraud types and what to look out for on a wider generic level, is the easiest countermeasure to understand fraud risk.

WNC Fraud Prevention course will:

- Assist in highlighting the importance of reporting fraud
- Help you identify some key indicators of possible fraud
- Identify some steps you can take to prevent the likelihood of fraud
- Give examples of potential fraud which could happen in your work area

We will also provide service specific awareness sessions, fraud awareness campaigns or information for events to promote awareness of fraud risk or good practice.

3. Fraud reporting

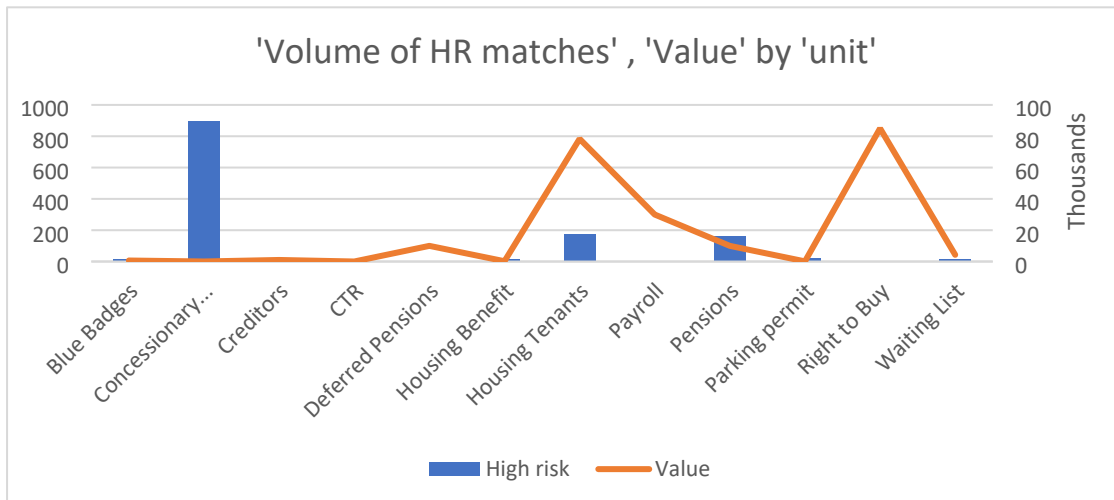
We have updated our reporting tool interface to enable reports to be sent to our managed mailbox from the Council website. [Reporting suspected fraud](#)

Staff are our first line of defence to identify and prevent fraud and more than half of our referrals come from staff.

4. Cabinet Office National Fraud Initiative

The 2022/23 National exercise matches were received on 27/01/23 and are being prioritised and worked on according to risk rating and values.

The chart shows the service area matched as well as the volume of matches received that are considered high risk in blue across the chart. Overlaid in orange is the estimated unit value which is considered for the priority review. For example, the highest number of matches or volume is concessionary travel passes and their unit value is far lower than a Housing Tenancy.



5. NFI Pilot (Cabinet Office)– Housing Tenancy Fraud

WNC were selected to be part of a pilot, testing the use of data matching innovation with Credit reference data and SIRA data (SIRA data includes sources such as insurance data) to expose tenancy fraud. We did not identify any cases of tenancy fraud from this first phase and have submitted feedback examples outlining areas where the data could be filtered to fine tune the matching for the second phase.

Our primary objective for Housing investigations is to recover properties that are being misused / sublet. These properties can then be relet to families in genuine need / on the waiting list or in bed & breakfast temporary accommodation (high-cost burden)

NFI Fraud Hub – purpose to identify fraud or error & preventing debt

Northamptonshire Pensions data was uploaded to the hub 10/06/22. The purpose of the exercise is to identify pension members matched with the Digital Death Register Information (DDRI) to prevent overpayments and the opportunity for fraud and error.

The hub data continues to be matched every fortnight with DDRI (death register) for new notifications. The objective is to notify the service and suspend / cancel payments where death confirmed to prevent overpayments which are difficult and costly to recover.

Between June and May there have been 79 pension notifications by the hub whereby the pensions service had not been made aware of the death prior to the data match. The Cabinet Office uses a formula to estimate the value of the prompt notification as an estimated saving of £1,967,402.74 overall, with £18,162.58 in actual overpayments being recovered because of the data matching.

Appendix A Statistics: outcomes closed investigations 2022/23

Reactive Investigation work – referred by the public or members of staff to Counter Fraud.

Table 2, Housing Investigations – 138 cases closed between April and March.

Case type	Cases closed	Advice given or no further action	YTD outcomes
Housing Tenancy referrals that have been Investigated and closed	83	62	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 16 Properties have been recovered to be relet to families in genuine need. • 3 Temporary accommodation properties were recovered not being used for purpose intended. • 1 was a Right to Buy sale due to be completed however no longer being lived in by the tenant, preventing discount £67,080 • 2 debts were identified during other RTB investigations which have been recovered. • HB £2,504.68 • HB £3,072.63 CTRS £557.08
Housing & Homeless Applications investigated and closed	55	34	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 21 Housing or Homeless applications have been cancelled or downgraded
Total	138	96	

- 16 properties have been recovered in total, (plus a further three temporary accommodation lets), which will be re let to those in genuine need from the waiting list. Each recovered property has a Cabinet Office estimated value saving of £93,000 x 16 recovered properties = £1,488,000, Cabinet Office estimated value saving
- 21 housing applications cancelled (£3,240 x 21) = £68,040, Cabinet Office estimated value saving.

Table 3, Other service investigations – cases closed between April and March

Case type / service	Cases Closed	Summary
Revs & Bens	53	28 outcomes have been recorded summarised below. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 15 recoverable overpayments of HB, CTR or both amounting to £55,283.74 • 14 HB awards cancelled or adjusted

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 9 CTR only awards cancelled or adjusted • 3 HB only wards cancelled or adjusted • 1 SPD cancelled raising a recoverable debt £1,335.88 <p>(18 were recorded as no further action / advice given or referred to DWP)</p>
Blue badge / Parking	5	5 referred to the parking team and or DWP
HR / staff matters	7	All matters are investigated in conjunction with HR colleagues. One case outcome was resignation and one referred to Democratic services whilst the others were no case to answer or no further action taken.
Finance	5	2 (one refund issue closed unable to pursue the refund recipient to recover the debt / advice given) 1 (theft by unknown person, report issued)
Grants	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • no further action to be taken – not fraud • Statement and exhibits collated to assist NATIS investigation
Children's Trust	15	All cases are referred to counter fraud by the No Recourse team to assist with their assessments for financial support. Credit checks and bank statements are reviewed for income and expenditure screening.
Total	89	

No significant outcomes relevant staff / managers / public / external partner advised.

Summary overview

These statistics demonstrate our investigation activity in delivering effective outcomes, highlighting the value of fraud and error being disrupted and recovered. Counter fraud resource is targeted to drive future outcomes by way of improvements and understanding of fraud risk to support the preventative approach to saving money at the outset, but also to address concerns and react to incidents efficiently.