

Local Transparency Code 2015 - Fraud

The Code requires Local Authorities to publish (on their website) the following information concerning fraud, as a minimum. The definition of fraud (as set out in the Protecting the Public Purse) used for this purpose is “an intentional false representation, including failure to declare information or abuse of position that is carried out to make gain, cause loss or expose another to the risk of loss”. This includes cases where management authorised action has been taken including, but not limited to disciplinary action, civil action or criminal prosecution.

Information required	Response
Number of occasions they use powers under the Prevention of Social Housing Fraud (Power to Require Information) (England) Regulations 2014 ¹ , or similar powers ²	The powers under the Prevention of Social Housing Fraud (Power to Require Information) Regulations 2014 have not been used by the Council. 4 requests for information were made in accordance with the Council Tax Reduction Scheme.
Total number (absolute and full time equivalent) of employees undertaking investigations and prosecutions of fraud	3 officers / 1.75 fte
Total number (absolute and full time equivalent) of professionally accredited counter fraud specialists	3 officers / 1.75 fte
Total amount spent by the authority on the investigation and prosecution of fraud	£104,235
Total number of fraud cases investigated	1

¹ S.I. 2014/899

² For example, the Council Tax Reduction Schemes (Detection of Fraud and Enforcement) (England) Regulations 2013 gives local authorities the power to require information from listed bodies, during the investigation of fraud connected with an application for or award of a reduction under a council tax reduction scheme: <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2013/501/contents/made>.

In addition to the minimum requirements, set out above, the Code further recommends that Local Authorities publish:

Recommended information	Response
Total number of cases of irregularity investigated	774
Total number of occasions on which a) fraud and b) irregularity was identified	a) 0 b) 97 Further cases of irregularity are identified on a monthly basis via the Real Time Initiative ³ , however due to the processing method it is not possible to quantify the number.
Total monetary value of a) the fraud and b) the irregularity that was detected	£0 £79,095.09: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • £38,546 identified via the National Fraud Initiative Scheme⁴ • £40,549.09 identified via the Revenues and Benefit Fraud Team
Total monetary value of a) the fraud and b) the irregularity that was recovered	It is not possible to quantify the value of irregularity recovered.

³ The Real Time Initiative is a bulk data matching scheme which matches Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs data against data held on six social security benefits; Income Support, Jobseekers Allowance, Housing Benefits, Employment and Support Allowance, Pension Credit and Carers Allowance. The purpose of the exercise is to identify cases where claimants have either failed to declare or under-declared earnings or pensions.

⁴ The National Fraud Initiative is an exercise that matches electronic data within and between public and private sector bodies to prevent and detect fraud.