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City Council

FORWARD TIMETABLE OF CONSULTATION AND MEETINGS:
Audit and Risk Committee **12 March 2014**

Counter-Fraud Update Report 2013

**Joint Report of the Director of Finance, the Director of Environmental Services
and the Director of Housing**

1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1. Internal Audit, whilst not directly responsible for the investigation of suspected financial irregularities, have a role in preventing fraud by recommending improvements to systems and procedures where appropriate.
- 1.2. Responsibility for the City Council's counter-fraud work is shared between the Corporate Counter-Fraud Team and the Revenues & Benefits Investigations Team both within Financial Services, the Trading Standards Team within Environmental Services and the Tenancy Fraud Team within Housing Services.
- 1.3. The report, which is attached, provides information on counter-fraud activities between 1 April 2013 and 31 December 2013.

2. Recommendations

The Committee is recommended to:

- 2.1. Receive the report
- 2.2. Make any recommendations it sees fit either to the Executive, the Director of Finance, the Director of Environmental Services or the Director of Housing.

3. Summary

- 3.1. This report includes information on reports issued, the main influences on the level and standard of performance between 1 April 2013 and 31 December 2013 and the key priorities for the remainder of the year.
- 3.2. New and emerging threats by increasingly sophisticated fraudsters and the opportunity for on line fraud require a sophisticated and vigilant response

from the Authority. In addition, support from all parts of the Council is essential in ensuring the effectiveness of counter fraud work.

- 3.3. As part of its work, the Corporate Counter-Fraud Team investigates suspected financial irregularities and makes recommendations to reduce the risk of further losses and improve performance, efficiency, effectiveness and economy in the use of resources by the Council. The team also delivers fraud awareness training and raises awareness of new threats by posting information on Interface and the schools Extranet.
- 3.4. The Revenues & Benefits Investigation Team specifically investigates suspected Housing Benefit and Council Tax Fraud and when appropriate works with the Department for Work and Pensions to sanction offenders through prosecution, financial penalties and cautions.
- 3.5. The Trading Standards Service is responsible for fair trading, consumer credit, product safety, weights & measures and age restricted products.
- 3.6. The role of the Tenancy Fraud Team is to pursue civil litigation to recover possession of the property and bring it back into proper use. This is a landlord action that is separate to any potential criminal actions for fraud. However, the Tenancy Fraud Team works closely with the Revenues and Benefits Investigations Team in cases where there is suspected Housing Benefit and tenancy fraud. An enforcement policy to enable prosecutions in respect of tenancy fraud under the provisions of the recently enacted Prevention of Social Housing Fraud Act 2013 is currently under consideration.

4. Report

- 4.1 See the Counter-Fraud update report 2012-13, attached.

5. Financial, Legal and Other Implications

5.1. Financial Implications

Fraud can cause the Council significant loss and activity to prevent and detect fraud is a clear financial investment.

Colin Sharpe, Head of Finance.

5.2. Legal Implications

The Authority has a duty to protect the public purse and effective counter fraud work is one way in which the authority does this. Counter fraud measures should mean that fraud is prevented but also that where it does occur it is detected and the authority can take appropriate action.

Sarah Khawaja, Principal Solicitor (Regulatory and Property).

5.3. Climate Change Implications

This report does not contain any significant climate change implications and therefore should not have a detrimental effect on the Council's climate change targets.

Chloe Hardisty, Senior Environmental Consultant, Environment Team, Property.

6. Other Implications

OTHER IMPLICATIONS	YES/NO	Paragraph References Within Supporting Information
Equal Opportunities	No	
Policy	No	
Sustainable and Environmental	No	
Crime and Disorder	Yes	This report is concerned with fraud and corruption, both of which are criminal offences.
Human Rights Act	No	
Elderly/People on Low Income	No	
Corporate Parenting	No	
Health Inequalities Impact	No	
Risk Management	Yes	This report is concerned with the prevention, detection and sanctioning of fraud. Fraud is one of the risks faced by the Council.

7. Background papers

7.1. Files held by Revenues and Benefits, Trading Standards and Housing Services

Leicester City Council's Anti-Fraud and Corruption Policy and Strategy

Leicester City Council's Finance Procedure Rules

Leicester City Council's Constitution

Leicester City Council's Code of Conduct for Behaviour at Work

Leicester City Council's Information Security Policy Statement

Leicester City Council's Prosecutions Policy

Leicester City Council's Investigators Code of Conduct

Public Bodies Corrupt Practices Act 1889

8. Consultations

None

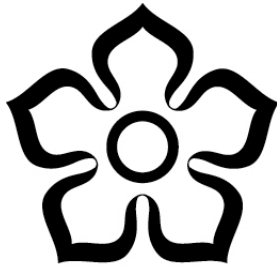
9. Report Authors

Caroline Jackson, Head of Revenues and Benefits, ext 372501

Ron Ruddock, Trading Standards Manager, Environmental Services, ext 373222

Mike Watson, Income Collection Manager, Housing Services, ext 395550

Alison Greenhill,
Director of Finance



Leicester
City Council

**COUNTER-FRAUD
UPDATE
April – December 2013**

COUNTER-FRAUD PERFORMANCE REVIEW - APRIL TO DECEMBER 2013

1. Introduction

- 1.1. This is a report to the Audit & Risk Committee on the work delivered by Leicester City Council's Corporate Counter-Fraud Team, Revenues & Benefits Investigations Team, Trading Standards Service and Tenancy Fraud Team during the first nine months of 2013.
- 1.2. The Corporate Counter-Fraud Team (CCFT) is an independent appraisal function, established by the Council to investigate suspected financial irregularities involving matters other than Housing Benefit and Council Tax Reduction, conduct proactive fraud-searching exercises and improve fraud awareness amongst employees.
- 1.3. The Revenues & Benefits Investigations Team provides direct support for the investigation, detection, deterrence and prosecution of fraud related to Housing Benefit and Council Tax Reduction.
- 1.4. The Trading Standards Service is responsible for fair trading, consumer credit, product safety, food standards, weights & measures and age-restricted products. According to Government statistics there were at least 9705 businesses active in the City in 2011.
- 1.5. The Tenancy Fraud Team investigates suspected illegal sublets with a view to returning Council properties back to the Authority. The Prevention of Social Housing Fraud Act 2012 came into force on 15 October 2013 and the Council will now seek to prosecute offenders.

2. The first nine months in summary

Corporate Counter-Fraud Team

- 2.1. The team comprises a part time Principal Investigations Officer (PIO) (30 hours per week) supported by one full time, permanent Counter-Fraud Officer, one temporary, part time Accounting Technician (26 hours) and two part time clerical support officers whose total hours equate to 33 hours per week. A full time Counter Fraud Officer was employed between April and September on a fixed term basis to assist with a backlog of cases that had arisen due to the ill health retirement of a former Counter Fraud Officer.
- 2.2. Referrals are received from a variety of sources, including whistleblowing disclosures made under the Council's Disclosure Policy.
- 2.3. The team liaises closely with the Council's legal services section, in particular to pursue civil recovery where appropriate.
- 2.4. On completion of an investigation a report or memo is usually produced for management outlining the circumstances of the investigation and drawing conclusions based on the findings of the investigation. Recommendations for improvements are also made.

- 2.5. The Head of Revenues and Benefits also discusses ways to improve processes with other senior managers including the Head of Procurement and Head of Internal Audit & Risk Management.
- 2.6. Fraud awareness training has been delivered to fifty three managers, including newly appointed employees, Leisure Centre Managers and Duty Officers and Children's Services Managers.
- 2.7. The Corporate Counter Fraud Team has now relocated to Wellington House and is managed by the Head of Revenue and Benefits pending a review of the Council's Fraud Service.

Revenues & Benefits Investigations Team

- 2.8. The team consists of an Investigations Manager and 8.56 full time equivalent (FTE) Investigation Officers. The team has experienced a number of resource issues during this period. One part time Investigations Officer left the authority in June 2013 and one of the full time investigators works two days each week on union duties. In addition to this the team has experienced periods of staff absence equivalent to 387 resource hours. Despite this the Revenues & Benefits Investigations Team has performed very well during the first nine months of the financial year. The sanctions target for the first nine months of the year is 180 and 151 sanctions have already been achieved. 71 cases are currently with Solicitors pending outcomes from prosecutions. The team remain confident that they will achieve their annual target of 240 sanctions in the remaining three months.
- 2.9. Following the successful prosecution of a false insurance claim made against the authority, the team continue to support the work of the Risk Management Team by assisting with cases of suspected fraud. There are currently three cases of this nature being investigated as there is a suspicion that the claims are either false or have been exaggerated. The work of the teams in this area has resulted in a nomination for the LGC Recognising Innovation awards 2014.
- 2.10. The team are also undertaking investigations into suspected Council Tax Discount Fraud. These cases involve potentially false claims for Single Person Discount (SPD). Single Person Discount is a 25% reduction in Council Tax when an individual lives alone or if the second adult in the household falls to be disregarded, for example a student. The Revenues & Benefits council tax teams now undertake a real time case load exercise to identify possible SPD fraud cases. 100 cases have been identified for further investigation as there is suspicion of a fraudulent claim.
- 2.11. The introduction of Universal Credits, to replace working age benefits, including Housing Benefit, casts some doubt over the future of the Revenues & Benefits Investigations Team. Decisions on the level of staffing required will be made ahead of 2015, the proposed date for the introduction of Universal Credits.

- 2.12. In May 2013 the team received training from an external provider on the new Council Tax Reduction Scheme and associated fraud offences.
- 2.13. During the period 1st April 2013 to 30th December 2013 £129,267.00 of the £571,012.50 of fraudulently claimed Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit has been recovered. The authority will pursue the remaining debt through various means including recovery from on-going benefit entitlement, arrangements to pay and court orders.
- 2.14. Some case studies of the work undertaken by the Revenues and Benefits Investigation Team are included at Appendix 1.

Trading Standards Service

- 2.15. The service has re-organised and now comprises a single investigation team, consisting of 8 Trading Standards Officers and one manager. The focus of the team is on investigation and enforcement of fair trading issues in a broad sense.
- 2.16. During the past nine months of the year the Trading Standards Service has been involved in nine major operations. These operations were supported by the police and HMRC where their assistance was required.
- 2.17. One Magistrates Warrant was obtained and executed at a residential address. This investigation is continuing.
- 2.18. The execution of a warrant normally involves the seizure and forensic examination of computers and mobile phones and the logging of intelligence onto a bespoke intelligence database. Timelines and association charts are produced and analysis of the data gathered assists with the investigation.
- 2.19. In addition to the major operations, a wide range of other frauds were and continue to be under investigation. Local car dealers continue to feature highly in the complaints received. Three are currently under investigation and we are working with a number of others in order to ensure compliance with the law. More than twenty cars that have had their mileage reduced before being sold on have been identified.
- 2.20. A number of builders/home improvement contractors are under investigation for apparently overcharging customers and/or seeking payment for unnecessary work. Legal services are currently processing two prosecution reports.
- 2.21. Not all complaints and tip-offs result in an investigation and not all investigations result in prosecution. Whilst we are able to rely on specific trading standards legislation for some cases we are increasingly using the Fraud Act as the most appropriate piece of legislation. We are also able to enforce against non-compliant traders by means of civil law under the Enterprise Act 2002.

- 2.22. The Trading Standards Service works closely with other neighbouring local authorities to share intelligence and good practice. They are active members of the regional forum Trading Standards East Midlands which affords the Trading Standards Service the ability to obtain operational support for large and complex investigations. They are also part of the National Trading Standards Policy Board (NTSB), an organisation that shares information across the country and may be able to provide funding and/or support for major operations. Lessons learned and intelligence from such operations is then shared nationally.
- 2.23. Trading Standards also host an Accredited Financial Investigator (AFI) who is able to undertake financial investigations under the Proceeds of Crime Act 2002 (POCA) into both Money Laundering and Confiscation matters. This is specifically aimed at depriving offenders of the proceeds resulting from their criminal conduct, including fraud related offences. The AFI is currently undertaking financial investigation on behalf of several other sections within the City Council in addition to Trading Standards and has successfully obtained Court Orders as a result of the confiscation investigations undertaken.
- 2.24. Where a Court Order is successfully obtained, the City Council can receive up to a third of the recovered amount back by way of an incentivisation payment for progressing the POCA investigation and recovering the criminal property. It must however be used for the sole purpose of furthering the fight against crime and is independently audited. Compensation orders can also be obtained to help reimburse victims for their losses, payable from the confiscation amount recovered. This also includes the City Council where it has itself been a victim (e.g. where it has been defrauded resulting in benefit payments being made as a result of a fraudulent application). In a very recent case this was exactly what had occurred and after successfully obtaining a confiscation order a compensation payment was then ordered to be made to the City Council for an amount in excess of £36,000.
- 2.25. Some case studies of the work undertaken by the Trading Standards Team are included at Appendix 2.

Tenancy Fraud Team

- 2.26. As a result of staff shortages the team currently comprises one full time and one part time officer. Funding secured from the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) will be used to recruit two temporary officers for two years.
- 2.27. Referrals are made to The Tenancy Fraud Team by estate management officers, repairs operatives and members of the public.
- 2.28. The Tenancy Fraud Team continues to work closely with the Revenue and Benefits Investigations Team to identify benefit fraud cases and more recently has identified a number of suspected fraudulent Right to Buy applications.

2.29. Plans are underway for the team to start undertaking enquiries on behalf of Oadby and Wigston Borough Council and other social landlords within Leicestershire to identify tenancy fraud and bring about criminal proceedings under The Prevention of Social Housing Fraud Act 2013. It is anticipated that this work will be cost neutral.

2.30. The team has also worked with a number of area offices and has assisted in investigating suspected fraudulent mutual exchange and succession applications. In order for a succession application to succeed the applicant must have lived in the property for at least twelve months. There have been a number of applications where this has not been the case.

2.31. Some case studies highlighting the Tenancy Fraud Team’s work can be found at Appendix 3.

3. Review of Performance

Corporate Counter-Fraud Team

3.1. The Corporate Counter-Fraud Team considers all cases of non-Housing Benefit suspected fraud and irregularity referred to it. Consideration is given to a number of factors including the potential level of loss, whether the referrer is reliable and whether the allegation may result in a referral to the police for consideration of criminal action. In some cases an investigation is undertaken, in others, managers are given advice and assistance to enable them to take appropriate action, not only to deal with the matter of concern but also to help prevent recurrences.

Table 1: Caseload between 1 April 2013 and 31 December 2013

Referrals Received	Not investigated	Advice and Assistance (A&A) Given	Investigated	Closed	Carried Forward (incl A&A)
67	13	28	26	86	28

3.2. Twenty six of the closed cases have been proven and one is still under investigation by the DWP. A number of the proven cases have been or are being investigated by management under the Council’s disciplinary procedure.

3.3. Where it has not been possible to prove fraud or misuse of Council facilities but weaknesses in systems have been identified advice is given to management to enable them to reduce the risk of fraud. The Corporate Counter Fraud Team check with management after three months to ensure that recommendations for change have been implemented.

3.4. The team work closely with management and regular dialogue ensures that issues arising as a result of the investigation are often addressed before the investigation is concluded. Management are more actively involved in

managing the fraud risks on their own teams and the Counter Fraud Team is therefore able to deal with more cases.

Revenues & Benefits Investigations Team

3.5. The Revenues and Benefits Investigations Team works closely with the Department for Work and Pensions and investigates Social Security Benefit Fraud. In addition they also provide criminal investigation support in respect of tenancy and insurance frauds.

3.6. The team secured a total of 151 sanctions during the first nine months of the year. The sanctions, against those found to have committed benefit fraud offences, consisted of 20 Formal Cautions (Warnings), 55 Administrative Penalties (Fines) and 76 Prosecutions.

Table 2: Summary of Revenues & Benefits Investigations Activity between 1 April 2013 and 31 December 2013

Benefit Caseload	42,300
Total number of referrals received	898
Cases allocated for full investigation	433
Referrals passed for a visit from R&B staff	422
Referrals passed to DWP to investigate	23
Cases closed with no fraud proven	291
Ongoing caseload	327
Formal Cautions issued (warnings)	20
Administrative penalties issued (fines)	55
Prosecutions secured	76
Total Sanctions	151
Investigations closed	442
Sanctions per '000 caseload	3.56
% of investigations sanctioned	34.1%

Trading Standards Service

3.7 In the last nine months the Trading Standards Service has received 638 referrals from Citizens Advice Consumer Service (Formerly Consumer Direct), these are prioritised for appropriate action. In some cases no action is required but most will require a response or an investigation. Some will result in a full investigation. The investigation team currently has twenty nine

full investigations at various stages in the process. Six of these are already with legal services. .

3.8. Reviews are undertaken fortnightly to ensure that cases are progressed and properly prioritised.

3.9. The work of the section, particularly in the investigation team, is expanding and becoming more complex. We have had a number of cases recently where it is has been necessary to have two officers investigating one case full time.

Tenancy Fraud Team

3.10. The team consider and prioritise all referrals. The number of cases awaiting investigation has increased as a result of unexpected staff shortages. Plans are underway to recruit more officers to assist with investigations.

Caseload from 1 April 2013 to 31 December 2013

Referrals Received	Properties Recovered	Right To Buys stopped	Ongoing Investigations	Awaiting Investigation
87	22	2	26	67

4. The next three months

4.1 Major objectives for the Corporate Counter Fraud-Team for the remainder of 2013-14 are:

- To manage the caseload within the resources available.
- To provide advice and assistance to managers.
- To support the Council in its efforts to deal with fraud and irregularity whether internally focused or from customers or other third parties against the Council. In particular working with managers to increase fraud awareness and ensure that appropriate safeguards are in place to prevent, deter and detect fraud.
- To support the Director of Finance and the Audit and Risk Team by identifying high fraud risk areas and working with management to mitigate those risks.
- To manage the 2012/13 National Fraud Initiative exercise, ensuring that all data sets are considered and appropriate action taken where irregularities have occurred.
- To consider ways of measuring fraud as requested by the Chair of the Audit and Risk Committee at the meeting on 16 July 2013.

4.2 Major objectives for the Revenues & Benefits Investigations Team for the remainder of 2013-14 are:

- To continue to uncover and take action against those found to be committing benefit fraud.
- To ensure that appropriate sanctions are imposed in line with the Council's Prosecution Policy.
- To continue to provide criminal investigation support in respect of social housing tenancy and insurance fraud.
- To implement a Tenancy Fraud Enforcement Policy.
- To build upon the good working practices already established with the DWP fraud service by continuing to attend regular liaison meetings to address and resolve any issues.
- To look into the suitability and availability of refresher training for the Investigators to reinforce their accredited professional qualification.
- To participate in the NFI exercise in relation to benefit matches and raise investigations on appropriate cases.
- To identify, through the use of data matching, potential fraudulent claims for Single Person Discount, investigate accordingly and prosecute where appropriate.
- To continue to work in conjunction with Housing Services to review the Authority's housing stock of approximately 22,000 properties in an effort to identify potential tenancy fraud.
- To take all necessary steps ahead of the implementation of the Single Fraud Investigation Service.

4.3 Major objectives for the Trading Standards Service for the remainder of 2013-14 continue to be tackling the following:

- Doorstep crime targeting vulnerable citizens.
- Counterfeiting, in particular, the supply of illicit tobacco and counterfeit goods with significant health & safety risks.
- Sale of tobacco and alcohol to children.
- Illegal money lending.
- Car safety and related fraud.

Additional priorities include:

- Implementing local tier arrangements as set out in the Integrated Operating Model established by the National Trading Standards Board.
- Introducing an IT case management system that can accommodate complex investigations and facilitate the production of case files/bundles for Legal Services.
- Establishing referral and joint working arrangements with the Police for regional/national level frauds operating from Leicester City.
- Establishing referral arrangements with Action Fraud Intelligence.

4.4 Major objectives for the Tenancy Fraud Team for 2013-14 are:

- To recruit two temporary staff for two years to undertake investigations into suspected tenancy fraud.
- To identify and recover as many unlawfully let Council properties as possible.
- To refer cases to the Revenues and Benefits Investigations Team for consideration of prosecution using the powers available in the Prevention of Social Housing Fraud Act 2013.
- To commence joint working with Oadby and Wigston Borough Council.
- To develop and improve the case management system.

5. Acknowledgment

5.1 The Director of Finance acknowledges the efforts of all members of the Corporate Counter-Fraud Team, Revenues & Benefits Investigations Team, Trading Standards Service and Tenancy Fraud Team and the help, co-operation and support of Members and officers of the City Council.

Caroline Jackson
Head of Revenues and Benefits

Ron Ruddock
Trading Standards Manager

Mike Watson
Income Collection Manager

List of Appendices

Appendix 1: Case Studies for Revenues & Benefits Investigations Team

Appendix 2: Case Studies for Trading Standards Service

Appendix 3: Case Studies for Tenancy Fraud Team

Case Study 1

A Leicester woman claiming Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit for her rented house failed to declare that she owned another property. She was interviewed under caution and denied knowledge of the property. When shown the land registry document she stated that she did not realise that she owned the property. As a result of the investigation it was established that she had falsely claimed in excess of £22,000 in Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit. She was convicted at Leicester Magistrates Court under the Social Security Administration Act 1992 and sentenced to 100 hours Community Punishment Order. She has now moved to her previously undeclared property.

Case Study 2

A Leicester woman claimed Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit but stated that she was not related to her landlord. An investigation revealed that her son was the owner of the property and that the tenancy was not commercial. Further enquiries revealed that her two sons had moved into each other's properties in an attempt to create rental liabilities. They were in effect trying to use the benefits system to pay the mortgages on their own properties. The woman had claimed almost £10,000 that she was not entitled to. She was prosecuted under the Fraud Act 2006, fined £100 and ordered to pay £500 towards the council's costs.

Case Study 3

A Leicester man claimed Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit from the authority for his rented accommodation in the city. He failed to declare that he subsequently moved to Birmingham and continued to receive Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit to which he was not entitled. He was overpaid in excess of £1,500 and accepted an Administrative Penalty of £876.96 as an alternative to prosecution.

Case Study 4

A Leicester man claimed Housing Benefit to help pay his rent but failed to declare when he started work. He was overpaid in excess of £600 and admitted the offence at an Interview Under Caution. He was offered and accepted a Formal Caution as an alternative to prosecution.

Appendix 2 Case Studies –Trading Standards Team

Case Study 1

Operation Callaghan commenced following complaints from a business owner that the sale of counterfeit DVD's in the vicinity of his shop was harming his business.

Following a number of successful test purchase operations a warrant was obtained to enter the premises. Three suspects were arrested and interviewed under caution. All suspects are on bail whilst investigations continue.

Case Study 2

This operation targeted licensed premises who sell illicit cigarettes.

Test purchases carried out on the target premises indicated that illicit tobacco was being kept and sold from these shops.

Involved in this operation were six Trading Standards Officers, two HMRC Officers and a detector dog and handler from Wagtail Ltd.

The following illicit tobacco and alcohol was seized from 3 premises visited following detection by the dog concealed in various locations, the till in one shop, another in a rucksack in a vegetable stand and another hidden in an outside yard in a black bag.;

5 packs of Golden Marlboro original (20) = 100 cigarettes found in the till.
48 packs of Marlboro Gold (20) = 960 cigarettes
19 packs of L & M Blue (20) = 380 cigarettes
12 packs Marlboro Gold (20) = 240 cigarettes
5 packs of L & M Blue (20) = 100 cigarettes

The following were found guilty in the Magistrates Court:

Amad Yateem t/a Central International Supermarket 76-80 Humberstone Gate Leicester pleaded guilty and was fined £675, costs 250 & £68 victim surcharge on 7 January 2014.

Ahmed Rasouli t/a Euro Food 242 Narborough Road Leicester pleaded not guilty, was found guilty and was fined £750, £510 costs and £75 victim surcharge on 9 January 2014.

Kasraw Abdulla Said t/a Baltic 128A Narborough Road Leicester pleaded guilty and was fined £400, £300 costs and £40 victim surcharge

Intelligence from HMRC is that the shops keep very small quantities on the premises and restock very quickly after a raid so that their losses are minimized.

Case Study 3

A warrant was obtained in October 2013 to enter a house being used to supply counterfeit dvd's nationally. A quantity of high quality counterfeit dvds, and a number of computers and telephones were seized for analysis and one arrest was made. The investigation is continuing.

Appendix 2 Case Studies –Trading Standards Team

Case Study 4

This was an operation involving all of the officers in the service. The team visited 20 traders and undertook a compliance inspection, providing the traders with general compliance advice. The operation took place during National Consumer week in November and it formed part of our strategy to address problems that we have identified with some sectors of the motor trade in Leicester. A number of businesses are generating significant numbers of complaints but regularly change ownership so that it is difficult to obtain redress. This also causes problems for other parts of the Council, for example businesses are changing hands without paying their business rates. The information that we obtained as a result of this exercise will inform continuing motor trader investigations

Appendix 3 Case Studies –Tenancy Fraud Team

Case Study 1

A referral from a member of staff alleged that the tenant of a three bedroom property was living elsewhere with her partner and allowing her two young adult daughters to live in the property. An active Right to Buy Application was also in progress. Investigations were carried out, a Notice to Quit was served and the Right to Buy put on hold. The tenant was interviewed regarding the situation and later terminated her tenancy. The Right to Buy application was also stopped.

Case Study 2

Reports were received that the tenant of a two bedroom house was not living there and was allowing her mother and brother to occupy the property. Investigations took place and it was found that the tenant was in fact living in Rotherham and had been for quite some time. Possession proceedings were commenced and were successful. The keys were handed in a week later.

Case Study 3

We were informed by the police that they had arrested one of our tenants at a different address. When they searched her two bedroom flat they found a male living at the property. He gave a statement saying that he was renting the property from our tenant for £300 per calendar month. The tenant had in fact been living with her boyfriend at another council property. Possession proceedings commenced. The tenant terminated her tenancy just before the hearing commenced and this was reflected in the court order given in court. This tenant had been claiming Housing Benefit so we worked closely with the Housing Benefit Investigations Team and they are looking at possible further action.