

Accounts Audit and Risk Committee

Review of Anti-Fraud Work 2012 - 13

26 June 2013

Report of the Head of Finance and Procurement

PURPOSE OF REPORT

This report sets out the review of the Investigations Team work in 2012/13.

This report is public

Recommendations

The Accounts, Audit and Risk Committee is recommended to consider and note the contents of this report.

Summary

During the reporting period, 163 Investigations were closed, with 94 Investigations on going as of 31/03/13. It is a slight drop on last year's figures, but this is due to the team sharing some resource with South Northants to help provide an Investigation Service at their authority.

The direction of the team has been moved away from benefit fraud to counter other areas of fraud. This is reflected in the sanctions with 30 of the 75 sanctions being discount frauds and not benefits fraud.

There has been a slight reduction in prosecutions this year with pressures put on the Legal team (through a complex DPA enquiry and internal FOI request), meaning that they were unable to match last year's performance. Fifteen people still received criminal records for their actions, which when compared with the Oxfordshire and Thames Valley benchmarking group is still a good performance.

Another pleasing statistic is that the team still identified £196,534 of benefits/discounts for recovery, against a target of £200,000. This is despite the emphasis moving into the area of discount fraud which doesn't attract the same level of overpayments that benefit cases do. Success rate is a healthy 65%, which indicates sound risk assessment and investigation of referrals made.

There has also been increased activity with other Council Services in our corporate capacity. In 2011-12 we investigated 4 cases. In the reporting period 2012-13 we investigated 14 with the main areas of abuse being in Housing and Elections with a couple of internal matters and Grants investigated successfully also.

The residents of Cherwell continue to support the work of the team accessing our Service with 72 Hotline calls, 20 letters and 11 website referrals made during the reporting period.

Implications

Financial: There are no implications arising from this report. Comments checked by Nicola Jackson, Corporate Finance Manager 01295 221731

Legal: There are no implications arising from this report. Comments checked by Nicola Jackson, Corporate Finance Manager 01295 221731

Risk Management: There are no implications arising from this report. Comments checked by Nicola Jackson, Corporate Finance Manager 01295 221731

Wards Affected

All

Document Information

Appendix No	Title
n/a	
Background Papers	
n/a	
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