Report to:	**Audit Committee**
Relevant Officers:	Tracy Greenhalgh, Chief Internal Auditor
Date of Meeting	24 November 2016

NATIONAL FRAUD INITIATIVE REPORT 2016

1.0   Purpose of the report:

1.1   To consider an overview of the outcome of the 2014-2016 National Fraud Initiative exercise and lessons learned from the process.

2.0   Recommendation(s):

2.1   The Audit Committee are asked consider the findings of National Fraud Initiative Report 2016, ask relevant questions and make any recommendations that are considered appropriate.

3.0   Reasons for recommendation(s):

3.1   To ensure that the Council can continue to provide a robust approach to fraud prevention and detection.

3.2a	Is the recommendation contrary to a plan or strategy adopted or approved by the Council?	No
3.2b	Is the recommendation in accordance with the Council's approved budget?	Yes

3.3   Other alternative options to be considered:

N/a

4.0   Council Priority:

4.1   The relevant Council Priorities are

•"The economy: Maximising growth and opportunity across Blackpool"
•"Communities: Creating stronger communities and increasing resilience"

5.0 **Background Information**

5.1 The National Fraud Initiative (NFI) Report 2016 focused on the outcomes from the National Fraud Initiative data matching exercise to help prevent and detect fraud, overpayments and errors.

5.2 Data for the National Fraud Initiative is provided by 1,300 participating organisations from across the public and private sectors. The data is cross matched and also compared to key data sets provided by other participants, including government departments. The organisations that participate in the National Fraud Initiative are responsible for following up and investigating the matches and identifying fraud and overpayments.

5.3 For the National Fraud Initiative exercise which ran between April 2014 and March 2016 £222 million was identified as fraud and error.

5.4 In terms of Blackpool Council the details of the outcomes were as follows:

Data Match	No of Cases Fraud or Error	Value
Housing Benefits to Student Loans	8	£47,589.34
Housing Benefits to Pensions	1	£8,688.08
Housing Benefits to Housing Benefits	4	£6,098.19
Private Residential Care Homes to DWP Deceased	2	£8,736.57
Council Tax Reduction Scheme to Pensions	3	£4,553.16
Duplicate Records by Amount and Creditor Reference	2	£45,238.67
Totals	**20**	**£120,904.01**

Does the information submitted include any exempt information?   No

List of Appendices:

Appendix 6(a): National Fraud Initiative Report 2016.

6.0 **Legal considerations:**

6.1 The procedures in place for fraud investigation help ensure that the Council's Corporate Fraud Team operates within the correct legislation and working practices.

7.0   Human Resources considerations:

7.1   The National Fraud Initiative programme requires staff from a range of Council services to be involved in the initial checks of the data matches. Therefore, only recommended matches are routinely checked due to resource restrictions across the Council.

8.0   Equalities considerations:

8.1   The Council's Fraud Response Plan helps ensure that all investigations are carried out objectively and fairly.

9.0   Financial considerations:

9.1   The robust investigation of potential fraud contributes to the protection of the Council's assets.

10.0   Risk management considerations:

10.1   When undertaking the National Fraud Initiative exercise the focus is on high risk / recommended matches to target resource appropriately.

11.0   Ethical considerations:

11.1   None.

12.0   Internal/ External Consultation undertaken:

12.1   None.

13.0   Background papers:

13.1   None.