

Protecting the public purse 2014: Fighting fraud against local government

Checklist for councillors and other responsible for governance

I. General	Yes	No	Actions Required
1. Do we have a zero tolerance policy towards fraud?			
2. Do we have the right approach, and effective counter-fraud strategies, policies and plans? Have we aligned our strategies with <i>Fighting Fraud Locally</i> ?			
3. Do we have dedicated counter-fraud staff?			
4. Do counter-fraud staff review all the work of our organisation?			
5. Does a councillor have portfolio responsibility for fighting fraud across the council?			
6. Do we receive regular reports on how well we are tackling fraud risks, carrying out plans and delivering outcomes?			
7. Have we received the latest Audit Commission fraud briefing presentation from our external auditor?			
8. Have we assessed our management of counter-fraud work against good practice?			
9. Do we raise awareness of fraud risks with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New staff (including agency staff); • Existing staff; • Elected members; and • Our contractors? 			
10. Do we work well with national, regional and local networks and partnerships to ensure we know about current fraud risks and issues?			
11. Do we work well with other organisations to ensure we effectively share knowledge and data about fraud and fraudsters?			
12. Do we identify areas where our internal controls may not be performing as well as intended? How quickly do we then take action?			
13. Do we maximise the benefit of our participation in the Audit Commission National Fraud Initiative and receive reports on our outcomes?			

I. General	Yes	No	Actions Required
14. Do we have arrangements in place that encourage our staff to raise their concerns about money laundering?			
15. Do we have effective arrangements for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reporting fraud? • Recording fraud? 			
16. Do we have effective whistle-blowing arrangements? In particular are staff: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aware of our whistle-blowing arrangements? • Have confidence in the confidentiality of those arrangements? • Confident that any concerns raised will be addressed? 			
17. Do we have effective fidelity insurance arrangements?			
II. Fighting fraud with reduced resources	Yes	No	Action Required
18. Are we confident that we have sufficient counter-fraud capacity and capability to detect and prevent fraud, once SFIS has been fully implemented?			
19. Did we apply for a share of the £16 million challenge funding from DCLG to support councils in tackling non-benefit frauds after the SFIS is in place?			
20. If successful, are we using the money effectively?			
III. Current risks and issues	Yes	No	Action Required
Housing tenancy			
21. Do we take proper action to ensure that we only allocate social housing to those who are eligible?			
22. Do we take proper action to ensure that social housing is occupied by those to whom it is allocated?			
Procurement			
23. Are we satisfied our procurement controls are working as intended?			
24. Have we reviewed our contract letting procedures in line with best practice?			

III. Current risks and issues	Yes	No	Action Required
Recruitment			
25. Are we satisfied our recruitment procedures: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prevent us employing people working under false identities; • Confirm employment references effectively; • Ensure applicants are eligible to work in the UK; and • Require agencies supplying us with staff to undertake the checks that we require? 			
Personal budgets			
26. Where we are expanding the use of personal budgets for adult social care, in particular direct payments, have we introduced proper safeguarding proportionate to risk and in line with recommended good practice?			
27. Have we updated our whistle-blowing arrangements, for both staff and citizens, so that they may raise concerns about the financial abuse of personal budgets?			
Council tax discount			
28. Do we take proper action to ensure that we only award discounts and allowances to those who are eligible?			
Housing benefit			
29. When we tackle housing benefit fraud do we make full use of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National Fraud Initiative; • Department for Work and Pensions Housing Benefit matching service; • Internal data matching; and • Private sector data matching? 			
IV. Other fraud risks	Yes	No	Action Required
30. Do we have appropriate and proportionate defences against the following fraud risks: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business rates; • Right to Buy; • Council tax reduction; • Schools; and • Grants? 			