

# Annual Report – Appendix Ec

## *Appendix B - Anti-fraud*



Homes for Haringey

2021/22

# Anti-Fraud outcomes 2021/22

## **Introduction**

The activity of the year's work, on behalf of Homes for Haringey, is reported to the Audit & Risk Committee on a quarterly basis. This Appendix, provides a short summary of the activity and the outcomes that are relevant to the Head of Internal Audit Opinion.

The Council's Audit & Risk Team has 6 investigators who work closely with teams in Homes for Haringey on a range of fraud prevention and detection activities. A officer from the tenancy team is seconded part time into the fraud team to ensure strong working relationships exist. Tenancy Fraud and Right to Buy are two key areas of work in the Council's Fraud Strategy.

The Deputy Head of Audit & Risk manages the day to day operations relating to fraud. During 2021/22 we have embedded our new fraud case management system which has greatly assist in the monitoring and reporting of fraud cases and will enable us to fulfil our service improvement plan going forward.

# Tenancy-fraud outcomes 2021/22

## Tenancy Fraud Investigations

The tables on the next slide contains information regarding caseload.

In 2021/22 **28** council stock properties had been recovered through the actions and investigations of the Fraud Team; therefore **£504k** can be attributed to the recovery, or cessation, of fraudulent council and temporary accommodation tenancies. This compares to **56** in 2019/20 and **21** in 2020/21.

In 2021/22 there were 211 referrals to the anti fraud team. This compares to a year to date figure of 2019/20 of 204 and 111 in 2020/21.

One of the team's prosecutions cases, after significant delays due to court closures during covid, reached trial date in March. The defendant pleaded guilty and will sentenced in October 2022.

## Tenancy fraud outcomes 2021/22

Referrals received and outcomes		
<b>Brought forward from 2020/21</b>	<b>187</b>	
New referrals in year	211	
Total referrals for investigation		398
<b>Properties recovered</b>		<b>28</b>
Cases Closed - No fraud identified		161
<b>Ongoing Investigations at year end</b>		<b>209</b>

# Other fraud outcomes 2021/22

## **Right to Buy (RTB) Investigations**

In 2021/22 **52** applications have been withdrawn or refused either following investigations and/or failing to complete money laundering processes. This compares to **90** for 2019/20 and **69** in 2020/21.

Overall, the **52** RTB applications withdrawn or refused represent **over £5.5m** in potential RTB discounts; and means the properties are retained for social housing use.

## **Employee related and Whistleblowing**

During 2021/22 there were three referrals, accepted by the Audit & Risk team, relating to staff in Homes for Haringey made under the Whistleblowing Policy. These cases are all closed at year end.

One 2019/20 case remains on-going and we are working with the police.

# Service Development for 2022/23

## **Pro Active Projects**

Now that the new structure in Tenancy Management is bedded in and covid restrictions have been lifted the fraud team plans to team up with Tenancy Officers to undertake risk based proactive exercises in the borough.

## **Training**

Officers new to the Tenancy Management Team will receive fraud training and awareness sessions.

## **Data Matching**

The team plans to use technology and available data sets (both internal and external) to proactively identify fraud cases for investigation and more efficiently gather assurances generally regarding fraud risk levels.

## **Mortality Screening**

We have signed up to be part of a trial project with our software providers which will notify us of service users deaths with the aim of streamlining processes.