

SOUTH HOLLAND DISTRICT COUNCIL

Report of: Finance Manager (Deputy S151 Officer)
To: Governance and Audit Committee – 25 June 2015
(Author: Mark Finch - Finance Manager (Deputy S151 Officer)
Subject: Fraud Report 2014-15
Purpose: To raise awareness of fraudulent activity detected during 2014-15

Recommendation:

- 1) To note the report

1.0 BACKGROUND

- 1.1 Until 2014 the Audit Commission had carried out a survey of fraud activity measured by authorities throughout the UK on an annual basis. Following the abolition of the Audit Commission the former Counter Fraud Team of the Commission are now undertaking the survey on behalf of The European Institute for Combating Corruption and Fraud (TEICCAF). TEICCAF is an umbrella body for local government, counter fraud professionals and professional bodies; including the Institute of Revenues Rating and Valuation (IRRV) and the Local Authority Investigating Officers Group (LAIOG).
- 1.2 This report summarises South Holland's survey submission for the year ended 31st March 2015. The following table shows the number of cases recorded for the annual return. There were also a number of cases of householders claiming single person occupancy (in order to gain a council tax discount) where circumstances had changed, and the discount was dis-applied. The numbers of these had not been recorded.
- 1.3 The table now has comparative figures relating to the previous year for cases relating to the Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme, which commenced in 2013-14. None of the cases involved officers or members of the council.

Table 1 - Summary of Identified Fraud Cases

	2013-14		2014-15	
	No. Cases	£ Value	No. Cases	£ Value
Housing & Council Tax Benefit	36	75,212	26	142,984
Council Tax Reduction	8	894	17	3,771

- 1.4 In 2014-15 seven of these cases were taken to court and ended in successful prosecutions. This compares with five cases in the previous year. The figures relate to the period to 1st September 2014. As part of the welfare reforms programme the Department for Works and Pensions took over responsibilities for benefits fraud investigation from local authorities after that date. There are no figures from the DWP to cover the second half of the year, although these will be reported to committee once they are received.
- 1.5 The survey also covered a number of other areas, but there were no recorded fraud cases. These areas included housing tenancy; national non-domestic rates; procurement, insurance and economic/third sector; debt and investment; payroll and expenses; and

abuse of position fraud

2.0 **OPTIONS**

2.1 To note the report.

2.2 To do nothing.

3.0 **REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION**

3.1 To meet corporate governance best practice

4.0 **EXPECTED BENEFITS**

4.1 To raise awareness of fraud activity identified during the financial year.

5.0 **IMPLICATIONS**

5.1 **Carbon Footprint / Environmental Issues**

5.1.1 It is the opinion of the Report Author that there are no implications.

5.2 **Constitution & Legal**

5.2.1 It is the opinion of the Report Author that there are no implications.

5.3 **Contracts**

5.3.1 It is the opinion of the Report Author that there are no implications.

5.4 **Corporate Priorities**

5.4.1 It is the opinion of the Report Author that there are no implications.

5.5 **Crime and Disorder**

5.5.1 The number of prosecutions is covered in the report.

5.6 **Equality and Diversity / Human Rights**

5.6.1 It is the opinion of the Report Author that there are no implications.

5.7 **Financial**

5.7.1 Reported in table above.

5.8 **Health & Wellbeing**

5.8.1 It is the opinion of the Report Author that there are no implications.

5.9 **Risk Management**

5.9.1 The authority recognises the risk of fraud and implements appropriate controls to mitigate these risks.

5.10 **Staffing**

5.10.1 It is the opinion of the Report Author that there are no implications.

5.11 **Stakeholders / Consultation / Timescales**

5.11.1 It is the opinion of the Report Author that there are no implications.

6.0 **WARDS/COMMUNITIES AFFECTED**

6.1 No wards or communities are affected.

7.0 **ACRONYMS**

7.1 TEICCAF - The European Institute for Combating Corruption and Fraud
IRRV - Institute of Revenues Rating and Valuation
LAI OG - Local Authority Investigating Officers Group

Background papers:- None

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Key Decision: No

Exempt Decision: No

This report refers to a Discretionary Service

Appendices attached to this report: None