

WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE COUNCIL

Report by Chief Executive

Audit and Performance Review Committee: 12 October 2011

Subject: National Fraud Initiative 2010/11

1. Purpose

- 1.1** To advise Committee members of the progress being made in investigating matched datasets provided to the Council as a result of the National Fraud Initiative 2010/11.

2. Background

- 2.1** The National Fraud Initiative ("NFI") in Scotland is Audit Scotland's data matching exercise that takes place every two years in line with the Audit Commission's NFI timetable. The NFI is designed to help participating bodies identify possible cases of fraud and detect and correct any consequential overpayments from the public purse.
- 2.2** West Dunbartonshire Council's "Strategy for Investigation of Matched Datasets" is attached in Appendix A to this report.

3. Main Issues

- 3.1** Filtering facilities within the database allow the number of cases to be reduced according to a pre-determined set of criteria. This is known as the "recommended filter". The "Summary of All Reports" contained at the back of the strategy document shows that a total of 2,712 matched items was provided to WDC for investigation, with 796 (29.35%) of these items being classified as "recommended filter matches".
- 3.2** The WDC approach to investigating these datasets has been to:-
- Initially investigate all individual cases listed through using the "recommended filter" feature
 - Review other cases, in order to determine if there is anything else of note, particularly where the amounts reported are relatively high
- 3.3** The investigation of matched datasets by WDC is shared between Internal Audit and the Benefit Investigation Team.
- 3.4** Progress to date on the examination of individual cases is summarised below:

Cleared with no further action	593
Investigation in progress	53
Cases where fraud discovered	0

Total	646
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3.5 Included in the total at 3.4 are 477 of the 796 (60%).

3.6 It should be noted that the full resolution of the individual cases selected for examination is often dependent on information being provided by other bodies, e.g. other local authorities, health boards, pensions bodies and the DWP. Some of the information requested has yet to be received by WDC staff.

4. People Implications

4.1 There are no personnel issues.

5. Financial Implications

5.1 There are no financial implications.

6. Risk Analysis

6.1 If matched dataset cases are not investigated sufficiently, particularly the “recommended filter” cases (see Section 3 above), there is a risk that instances of error and fraud may not be detected.

7. Equalities, Health & Human Rights Impact Assessment

7.1 There are no issues.

8. Strategic Assessment

8.1 This report relates to fit for purpose services by improving service delivery models for continuous improvement

9. Conclusions and Recommendations

9.1 Satisfactory progress has been made in investigating the matched datasets.

9.2 The Committee is asked to note the contents of this report.

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Date: 12 September 2011

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Appendix A: National Fraud Initiative 2010/11: Strategy for Investigation of Matched Datasets

Background Papers: None

Wards Affected: All Wards