

SLOUGH BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Audit & Corporate Governance Committee

DATE: 14th December 2017

CONTACT OFFICER: Neil Wilcox, Director Finance & Resources
(Section 151 Officer)

(For all Enquiries) (01753) 875358

WARD(S): All

PART I **FOR COMMENT & CONSIDERATION**

CORPORATE FRAUD UPDATE – QUARTER 3 2017/18

1. **Purpose of Report**

This report updates the Audit & Corporate Governance Committee on the counter fraud activity of the Council in the 3rd Quarter of 2017/18.

2. **Recommendation(s)/Proposed Action**

That the activity and outcomes of the Corporate Fraud Team are noted.

3. **The Slough Joint Wellbeing Strategy, the JSNA and the Five Year Plan**

3a. **Slough Joint Wellbeing Strategy Priorities**

The governance of the Council underpins the delivery of all of the Joint Slough Wellbeing Strategy priorities.

3b. **Five Year Plan Outcomes**

The work of Corporate Fraud also reflects the priorities of the Five Year Plan as follows:

- *Our children and young people will have the best start in life and opportunities to give them positive lives.*
- *Our people will become healthier and will manage their own health, care and support needs.*
- *Slough will be an attractive place where people choose to live, work and visit.*
- *Our residents will have access to good quality homes.*
- *Slough will attract, retain and grow businesses and investment to provide jobs and opportunities for our residents*

4. **Other Implications**

(a) **Financial**

There are no financial implications contained in this report

(b) Risk Management

<i>Recommendation</i>	<i>Risk/Threat/Opportunity</i>	<i>Mitigation(s)</i>
<i>That the activity and outcomes of the Corporate Fraud Team are noted</i>	This report addresses the issue of fraud	

(c) Human Rights Act and Other Legal Implications

There are no Human Rights issues contained in this report

(d) Equalities Impact Assessment

There is no need for the completion of an Equalities Impact Assessment

5. **Supporting Information**

5.1 So far this quarter The Corporate Fraud Team (CFT) has dealt with 207 enquiries to date from a range of sources including:

- Police Authorities
- The Council's Legal Section (in relation to Right to Buys)
- Department of Works Pensions
- referrals from the general public

5.2 The increase is in part due to the appointment of our Intelligence Officer who is on hand to speak to people rather than to the automated response previously in place.

5.3 We submitted 3 cases to HB Public Law to consider prosecution these have been accepted Summons drafted and a Court date for all 3 of 23.2.18.

We also have a case with the Crown Prosecution Service for Housing and Council Tax Benefit offences & Housing Fraud awaiting a decision.-Person removed from temporary housing and removed from housing register awaiting summons.

5.4 The Council's Financial Investigator has six Financial Investigations open. She has recently concluded a Land Registry Tribunal Trial with the applicants having their claim cancelled. They are now seeking leave to appeal.

5.5 7 administrative penalties in relation to CTRS fraud with the financial penalty amount paid in full totalling £1597.90.

A Fraud referral form specifically designed for use by Housing staff to report their concerns has already resulted in referrals to the Corporate Fraud Team and enables us to have a more consistent approach when assessing Housing Fraud Cases.

We continue to be involved at all stages of the Right to Buy process in order to prevent and detect fraudulent applications. In a recent case £1904.56 Housing Benefit & £95.06 CTRS was repaid prior to the acceptance of a Right to Buy application.

The team has attended workshops on the impact of the General Data Protection Regulation in relation to investigations, and a Housing Tenancy Forum. In early December we will be attending a Business Rates training day as we will be looking at this area of potential fraud in the New Year.

6. **Comments of Other Committees**

There are no comments from other Committees.

7. **Conclusion**

The Committee are requested to note details of the activity and outcomes of the Corporate Fraud Team.

8. **Background Papers**

None