

Protecting the English Public Purse Fraud Briefing 2015

North Hertfordshire District Council

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Purpose of Fraud Briefing

1. Provide an information source to support councillors in considering their council's fraud detection activities
2. Extend an opportunity for councillors to consider fraud detection performance, compared to similar local authorities
3. Give focus to discussing local and national fraud risks, reflect on local priorities and the proportionate responses needed
4. Be a catalyst for reviewing the council's current strategy, resources and capability for tackling fraud

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About TEICCAF

The European Institute for Combatting Corruption And Fraud

Not for profit charity seeking to provide counter fraud and corruption strategic vision and thought leadership for public sector and charity organisations

Staffed by the former Audit Commission Counter Fraud Team

Continuation of expertise on the fraud risks facing councils

Continuation of the award winning '*Protecting the Public Purse*' reports

Working collaboratively with public sector bodies, charities and private companies across the UK, Europe and around the World

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Understanding the bar charts

All data are drawn from council submissions for the TEICCAF annual fraud and corruption survey for 2014/15

Your council is compared with the other district councils across the East of England taking part in the voluntary survey

National district council submission rate: 59.7%

English councils surveyed submission rate: 59.5%

(County councils, district councils, metropolitan districts & unitary authorities and London boroughs)

Your council for detected cases is shown in Yellow

Your council for detected value is shown in Red

All averages are 'mean' averages

In some cases, council report they have detected fraud and do not report the number of cases and/or the value - for the purposes of this fraud briefing these 'Not Recorded' records are shown as Nil

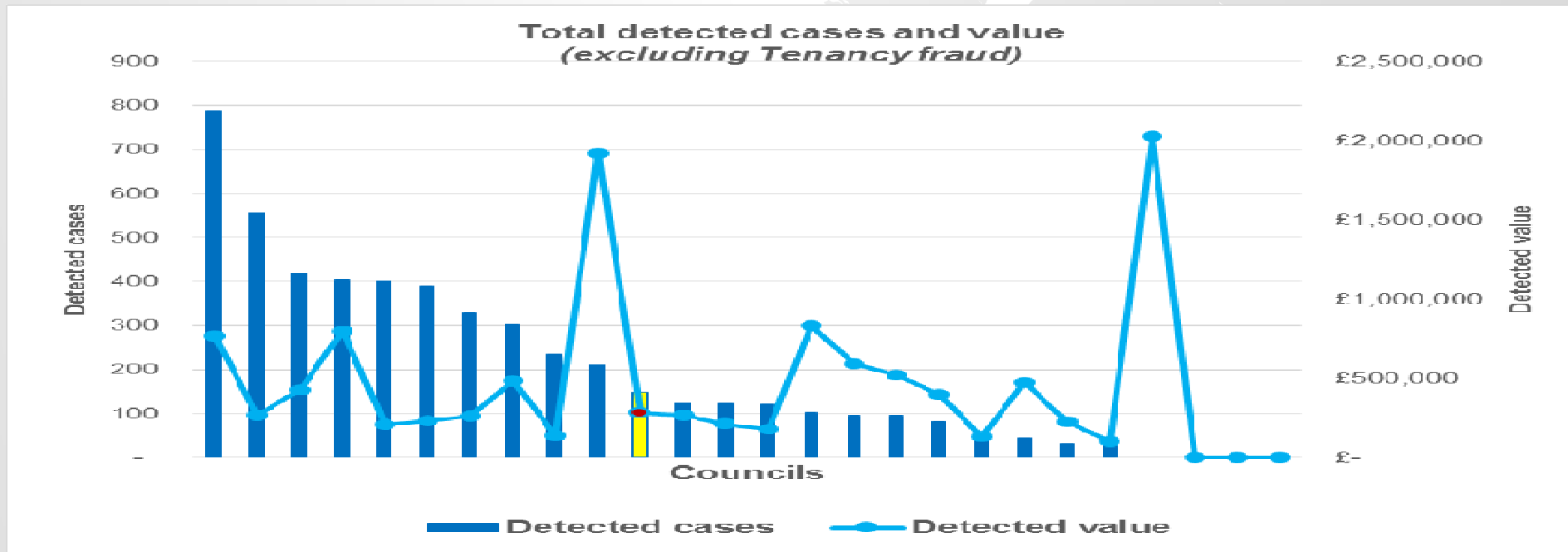
NB it is always best practice to ensure counter fraud activity is accurately and comprehensively recorded, particularly for assessing fraud risk

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Total detected cases and value (excluding tenancy fraud)



Your council - Total number of detected cases: 148. Total detected value: £279,883.

Comparator council average – Detected cases: 196. Detected value: £451,923.

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Housing benefit (HB) and council tax benefit (CTB)

The investigation of benefit fraud is transferring from councils to the Department for Work and Pensions Single Fraud Investigation Service (SFIS)

Some councils have already transferred their benefit fraud investigators to SFIS, the remaining councils should have done so by March 2016

This makes the comparison of HB/CTB of little value, as some council did not investigate HB/CTB in 2014/15, or others only a part of the year

However, you may wish to ask:

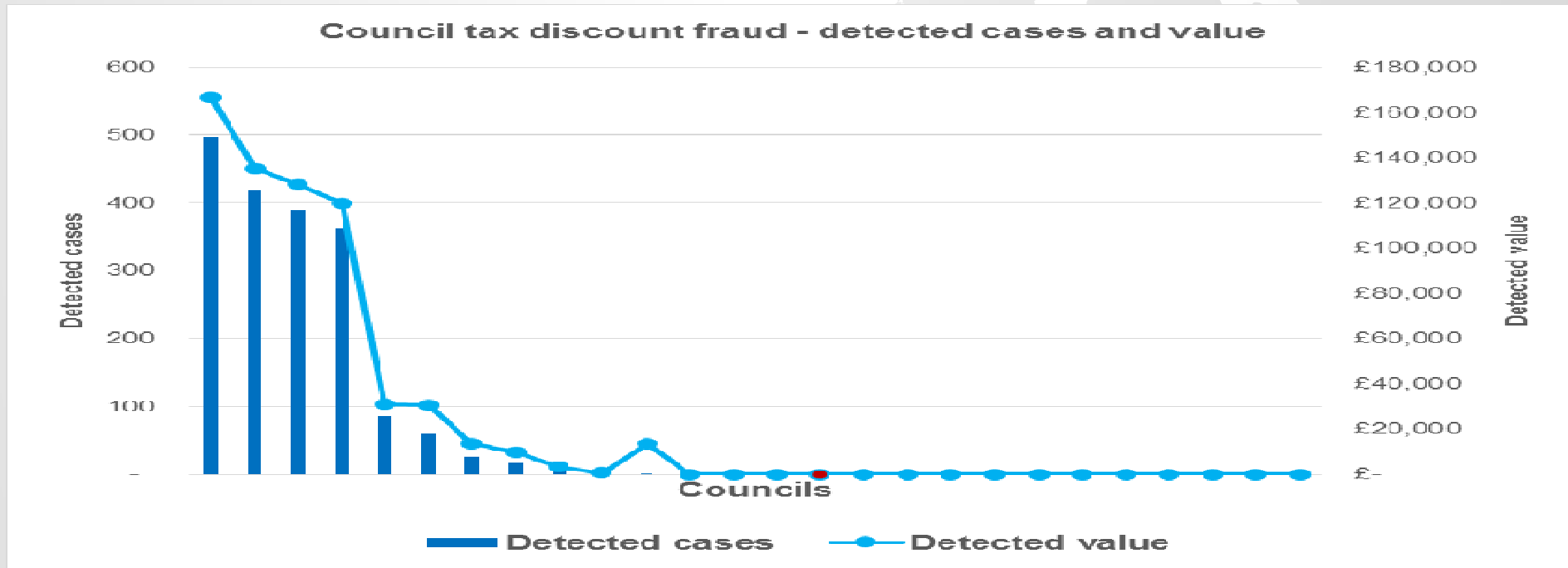
- Does my council have enough counter fraud resource to tackle non-benefit fraud post SFIS?
- Does my council's counter fraud resource have the skill sets to tackle the wide and varied range of non-benefit frauds?
- Is there a partnership working arrangement available that helps provide a counter fraud resource and value for money?

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Council tax discount fraud



Your council - Total number of detected cases: nil. Total detected value: nil.

Comparator council average – Detected cases: 72. Detected value: £25,061.

Social Housing fraud

(councils without housing stock)

Although your council does not have housing stock the financial and social cost of homelessness and a lack of affordable housing falls on councils

The Prevention of Social Housing Fraud Act 2013 criminalises tenancy fraud and it is councils that have the powers to investigate and prosecute tenancy fraudsters on behalf of housing associations

Soon those living in housing association properties will have the Right to Buy (RTB) their homes

However, at least **3%** of RTB applications in London councils are fraudulent and at least **1.5%** in the rest of the country's councils

But, most housing associations do not have the counter fraud resource to combat tenancy fraud or RTB fraud

Should your council be partnering with the housing associations in your area to ensure social housing is not abused and stolen by fraudsters?

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Other frauds

Procurement fraud

Your council - Total number of detected cases: nil.

Comparator council average – Detected cases: nil. Detected value: nil.

No recourse to public funds fraud

Your council - Total number of detected cases: nil.

Comparator council average – Detected cases: 1. Detected value: £988.

Business rates

Your council - Total number of detected cases: nil.

Comparator council average – Detected cases: 1. Detected value: £2,329.

Internal fraud

Your council - Total number of detected cases: nil.

Comparator council average – Detected cases: 1. Detected value: £9,095

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Further information and support

The '*Protecting the English Public Purse 2015*' (PEPP) report and the '*Protecting the London Public Purse 2015*' (PLPP) report are available at www.teiccaf.com

These reports also contain a counter fraud checklist for councils to use – questions you may wish to ask:

- Are local priorities reflected in our approach to countering fraud?
- Have we considered counter-fraud partnership working?
- Are we satisfied that we will have access to comparative information and data to inform our counter-fraud decision making in the future?

If you have any questions concerning:

- this fraud briefing;
- TEICCAF; or
- how TEICCAF can support you in counter fraud, counter corruption and anti-money laundering?

Please contact Duncan Warmington, Secretary to the Board at duncanw@teiccaf.com

TEICCAF, and our sponsor, 'INTEC for business', hope you found this fraud briefing useful and encourage your council to participate in the 2015/16 TEICCAF annual fraud and corruption survey

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