

## SERVICE UPDATE

<b><u>Name of Service:</u></b>	Governance (Assurance)
<b><u>Date:</u></b>	August 2019
<b><u>Title of Update:</u></b>	Investigation Statistics
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### **UPDATE:**

To provide elected members with a summary of results from investigations undertaken during 2018/2019 by the Corporate Investigation Team. Investigations fall into two categories; internal and external.

Internal: Staff Misconduct, Whistleblowing, Investigations undertaken on behalf of a Senior Service Manger

External: Where a service user or third party has claimed for a council service and failed to provide the proper documentation or failed to report a change of circumstances where they are required to do so.

### **1. Investigations**

	<b>15/16</b>	<b>16/17</b>	<b>17/18</b>	<b>18/19</b>
Referrals received	181	305	387	411
No further action/passed to other service or agency	81%	78%	68%	64%
Cases opened	19%	22%	32%	36%

We have seen another increase in the number of referrals being received. The team's visibility within the Council continues to increase with the varied workload which allows us to increase fraud awareness.

## 2. Savings

Description	17/18	18/19
Housing Tenancy	£186,000	£372,563
Housing Benefit (joint working) *	£ 93,928	0.00
Blue Badges	£2300	£18,975
Scottish Welfare Fund	£160	£591
Parking Permits	£50	£250
Council Tax & Council Tax Reduction	£ 55,796	£24,729
Other	£990	£5,589
NFI	£116,732	£26,773*
<b>TOTAL SAVINGS</b>	<b>£455,956</b>	<b>£449,470</b>

Savings figures are based on actual savings and notional savings calculated from criteria laid down by the Cabinet Office and the Department for Work and Pensions. Recovery of money lost to the Council by fraud is the responsibility of the relevant service and CIT will provide information to allow the service to recover the debt.

\*DWP claim savings for Housing Benefits

\*NFI figure is a snapshot of the position to date (April 2019).

## 3. Blue Badge & Parking Permits

Type	Number seized	Warning Letters Issued	Referred to PF	Accepted by PF
Blue Badge	28	13	11	11
Parking Permits	5	6	0	0

This is the first complete year we have had a dedicated resource concentrating on Blue Badge and Parking Permit misuse. Several other cases of fraud against the Council were identified (including two cases involving Aberdeen City Council employees) as a result of Blue Badge investigations.

#### 4. Other Investigations

Description	17/18	18/19
Staff Misconduct	4	7
Operations (closed)	2	2

Operations may span more than 1 reporting period therefore it will only be recorded when it is closed.

#### 5. Overall costs

	16/17	17/18	18/19
Operational Costs	£144,000	£140,078	£162,475
Savings	£389,914	£455,959	£449,470
Investment Return	2.7	3.2	2.7

During the year we recruited a fixed term contract Blue Badge and Parking Enforcement Officer which increased our operational costs. Our combined anti-fraud initiatives have still allowed us to maintain a positive investment return.

#### 6. Summary

The refreshed Local Outcome Improvement plan gives a commitment to improve the City's economy and to deliver targeted interventions aimed at reducing specific offences and supporting people and families affected. The increased number of referrals being received is welcome and gives us the opportunity to reduce losses to the public purse at an early stage as well as allowing us to signpost those who are vulnerable or struggling financially towards other Council services instead of being managed by the criminal justice system.

A review of the team's priorities will be undertaken as part of the Governance Service Redesign to ensure investigation resources are being focused on high risk areas and administration tasks reduced as much as possible.

We continue to recognise the value of collaboration and the opportunity to share resources, skills and work across geographical boundaries is key to tackling fraud. This must be balanced against available resources and time however we will continue to seek every opportunity to do so.