

Summary Fair Treatment Assessment (FTA)

Area for Assessment:		
Name of service or function etc	Counter-Fraud Strategy	
Which Service does this affect?	Governance Services	
Is this a new, existing or revised function?	Revised	If a Saving please give amount(£) N/A
Summary of findings:		
Main conclusions on the likely impact of the function on different equality groups (protected characteristics):		
<p>Benefit and non-benefit fraud referrals can come from a variety of sources.</p> <p>Benefit fraud referrals are sifted and actioned, based on value and duration of the fraud. Where benefit fraud cases are identified, these are treated on a case-by-case basis, without any reference to protected characteristics. There is a consistent approach to applying benefit fraud sanctions, using set criteria of value and timescales for each case.</p> <p>100% of non-benefit fraud referrals are examined. There is no discretion from an equalities perspective, as all cases are actioned consistently. There is currently no monitoring undertaken on the outcome of non-benefit fraud cases. They are also treated on a case-by-case basis, without any reference to protected characteristics.</p> <p>The current counter-fraud work is a 'blanket' approach, aimed at all members of the community. This includes the promotion of whistleblowing facilities and all fraud publicity.</p> <p>To date, fraud has been predominately identified through whistleblowing allegations or through individual issues raised during day to day work. The ability to proactively identify fraud is now widening, with the introduction of data sharing and electronic data matching tools, to compare different sets of data and investigate anomalies identified.</p> <p>This revised Counter-Fraud Strategy reflects this changing approach, to clearly outline both the reactive and proactive counter fraud work that will be undertaken from 2012 onwards. It outlines our greater commitment to preventing and detecting fraud. This strategy demonstrates the planned increase, over the next 3 years, in our counter-fraud work, with particular focus on data matching to identify fraud and error. This data matching will compare whole sets of data against each other, and will be both borough and system wide, rather than exercises based on any form of sampling.</p> <p>We will monitor the scope and results of the counter fraud exercises in order to identify trends, and ensure any possible negative impacts on the community are identified and addressed.</p>		

If any of this work is found to be impacting on any people with a particular protected characteristic, including socio-economic issues, then the fraud strategy can be adjusted to address this, to learn from it and to inform future counter fraud exercises.

Actions:

Actions to be taken to mitigate or reduce any negative impact:

Action	Outcome	Timescale
To review data already collected, to establish a baseline equality profile	Baseline equality data can be used to inform equality monitoring and trend analysis.	September 2012
To monitor the outcome of future fraud cases.	Sanctions are applied consistently in all cases.	From April 2012
To monitor the sifting process for reports of fraud, prior to investigation	Clear criteria for investigating fraud cases are developed and implemented.	From April 2012
To ensure monitoring included in new risk assessment process for benefits, where staff will only verify high / medium risk cases.	Consistent approach for the risk assessment and verification of benefit cases	From April 2012
To produce monitoring reports and trend analysis information from the benefits system (Northgate).	Informed approach to counter fraud work and fraud awareness promotions.	From April 2012
To utilise the results of the 2011 Poverty Needs Assessment work, feeding into the new risk assessment process for benefits	Consistent approach for the risk assessment and verification of benefit cases	From April 2012
Date Assessment Signed Off	17 April 2012	