

Mr David C Rodger  
By email

Please ask for: Miles Watters  
Contact Number: 01463 702029  
Email Address: [foi@highland.gov.uk](mailto:foi@highland.gov.uk)  
Your Ref:  
Our Ref: HC0226-2413  
Date: 19 October 2017

Dear Mr Rodger

### **Freedom of Information Request**

I refer to your Freedom of Information Request received on 13 October 2017.

I have given my responses below.

*1. Does your authority have a Corporate Fraud Team, if so when was the team incorporated?*

A: Yes, the Corporate Fraud Team commenced on 01/08/15.

*2. Details of the number of referrals received during the financial year 2016/17, this should include details of number of referrals with a breakdown of the type of suspected fraud e.g.*

*Council Tax Reduction,*

*Council Tax Discount,*

*Blue Badge,*

*Housing Tenancy Fraud*

*and all other types of fraud or error or anything else investigated by the team.*

A: There were 51 referrals received in 2016/17, broken down as follows:

- Housing tenancy: 40
- Council Tax Reduction (CTR): 6
- Housing tenancy & CTR: 3
- Grant fraud: 1
- Other (supplier and employee collusion): 1

Blue badge frauds come under the remit of the Corporate Fraud Team. However, no referrals have been made.

*3. Details of the value of fraud or error established during the financial year 2016/17, this should include details of fraud or error with a breakdown of the type of established fraud or error e.g.*

*Council Tax Reduction,*

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**Director of Corporate Resources**  
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*Council Tax Discount, Blue Badge,  
Housing Tenancy Fraud*

*and all other types of fraud or error or anything else investigated by the team.*

A: Value of fraud or error established during the year (note that this includes referrals from the previous year which were concluded in 2016/17):

- Housing tenancy: 19 properties recovered including 6 which were referred in the previous year
- CTR: £3,162.05, including £278.75 from the previous year's referrals
- Council Tax discount: £218.46
- Employee theft of income: £2,055.

*4. Details of the number of cases reported to the Procurator Fiscal for consideration of criminal proceedings. Again this should include a breakdown of the type of established fraud or error e.g.*

*Council Tax Reduction,  
Council Tax Discount,  
Blue Badge,*

*Housing Tenancy Fraud*

*and all other types of fraud or error or anything else investigated by the team.*

A: 1, in respect of employee theft (see Q5)

*5. The number of employees dismissed or tendered their resignation either as a result of or during the course of an investigation.*

A: 1

*6. I understand that Housing Benefit investigation is the responsibility of the DWP but believe that your investigations could also result in the identification of Housing Benefit fraud or error. Please provide a breakdown of any housing benefit fraud or error identified by your corporate fraud team.*

A: In 2016/17 as a result of the referrals received by the Corporate Fraud Team 18 referrals were made to the DWP where individuals were in receipt of Housing Benefit. 16 cases were suspected tenancy fraud and 2 were CTR.

I trust this information is helpful to you.

Under Section 20 of the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002 and/or Regulation 16 of the Environmental Information (Scotland) Regulations 2004 (EIRs), you have the right to request that the Highland Council reviews any aspect of how it has dealt with your request. This requirement for review should be put in writing to the Freedom of Information Officer, Chief Executive's Office, Glenurquhart Road, Inverness IV3 5NX, within 40 working days

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**Director of Corporate Resources – Derek Yule**

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of receipt of this letter. The request should include details of the information requested and the aspects of the Highland Council's response which you are not satisfied with.

If you are subsequently dissatisfied with the outcome of the Council's review, you have the right to appeal to the Scottish Information Commissioner under Section 47 of the Act (Regulation 17 of the EIRS), within six months of receiving the Council's review response.

Yours sincerely



Derek Yule  
Director of Corporate Resources