

## Southend-on-Sea City Council

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## Appendix 1 – Counter Fraud Work Plan 2024-2025

### KEY:

Denotes proactive activities
Denotes prevention/protection activities
Denotes development activities

Area	Activity	Target date	Current status	Resource requirement (officers)	Responsible officer	Completed date
Counter fraud	Maintain business as usual through management of the caseload, timely investigation of referrals towards a prompt, efficient and fair resolution, proactive fraud detection initiatives and the provision of advice and training to the wider council.	Ongoing	Business as usual is being disrupted due to a vacancy and the high volume of internal investigations being undertaken. The following two activities are aimed at addressing this.	5	Shaun DUTTON	<b>ONGOING</b>
Counter fraud	Recruit to fill the vacant Fraud Investigator post.	July 2024	The recruitment campaign failed to identify suitable candidates for the role. The current strategy is to offer the team's apprentice the role when she qualifies. <b>This officer took up the permanent role in November.</b>	2	Shaun DUTTON	<b>01/11/2024</b>

Area	Activity	Target date	Current status	Resource requirement (officers)	Responsible officer	Completed date
Counter fraud	Expand the complement of the Counter Fraud Team to address the workload and increase returns	March 2025	A business case for the expansion of the Counter Fraud Team has been submitted. <b>Funding for this has been provisionally approved for 2025/26.</b> <b>An investigator has been recruited on a fixed term contract to 31/03/2025</b>	2	Shaun DUTTON	PROGRESSING
Council wide	Internal publicity campaign to highlight the work and reporting mechanisms of the fraud team.	Ongoing	Avenues to increase the team's profile across the Council are being explored.	1	Shaun DUTTON	<b>ONGOING</b>
		Ongoing	Continue to publish the monthly fraud newsletter to staff and residents.	1	Shaun DUTTON	<b>ONGOING MONTHLY</b>
		November 2024	Publicity campaign to highlight International Fraud Awareness Week.	1	Shaun DUTTON	<b>22/11/2024</b>
Housing	Pro-active fraud detection and deterrence exercises on social tenancies.	July 2024	To be targeted in areas at high risk of subletting.	6	Shaun DUTTON	<b>03/08/2024</b>
		September 2024	Appropriate areas of activity will be determined during the planning stage.	6	<b>POSTPONED</b>	<b>EARLY 2025</b>
		March 2024		6	TBC	

Council wide	Fraud risk and process analysis of areas of the Council's business at high risk of fraud through participation in internal audits.	Ongoing	This work will be performed alongside Internal Audit's programme of work with risk assessment findings incorporated into their reports. This has the effects of adding more weight to any recommendations made and contributing to a closer working relationship between the two teams. <b>One officer has been trained as a Fraud Risk Manager. A fraud risk assessment project is expected to commence in January 2025.</b>	2-5	Shaun DUTTON	<b>PROGRESSING</b>
Council wide	Feedback improvements in policy and procedure arising from investigative activities	Ongoing	Continue to issue specific post-investigation reports recommending process / policy improvements that would provide a greater protection from fraud where appropriate.	2-5	Shaun DUTTON	<b>ONGOING</b>
Blue Badge	Proactive fraud detection and deterrence exercise on Blue Badges	August 2024	Plain clothes enforcement exercise. Areas of activity to be determined at the planning stage but targeted at areas of reported high incidence of blue badge fraud.	6	Shaun DUTTON	<b>30/08/2024</b>
Housing	Updated housing fraud training to SEH tenancy staff and possibly service engineers.	TBA	This is in the planning stage and will be updated once the training package has been updated and SEH have been consulted.	1	Shaun DUTTON	
Blue Badge	Updated blue badge enforcement training to APCOA CEOs	February 2025	This is in planned to take place in early 2025, this has been agreed with APCOA.	1	Shaun DUTTON	

Housing	Pro-active checks on Council tenants who have a rent account credit in excess of £1,000	Ongoing	SEH are providing monthly lists of tenants who have large rent account credits. Checks on the largest credits are being performed as an additional service as and when the team's workload allows.	1	Shaun DUTTON	<b>ONGOING</b>
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