

# 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 at the end of October. <b>This officer will take up the permanent role at the beginning of November.</b>	2	Shaun DUTTON	

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 written and is under review as part of the preparation of the 2025/26 budget.	2	Shaun DUTTON	
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</b>
		November 2024	Publicity campaign to highlight International Fraud Awareness Week.	1	Shaun DUTTON	
Housing	Pro-active fraud detection and deterrence exercises on social tenancies.	July 2024	To be targeted in areas at high risk of subletting. Appropriate areas of activity will be determined during the planning stage.	6	Shaun DUTTON	<b>03/08/2024</b>
		September 2024		6	TBC	
		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	2-5	Shaun DUTTON	<b>ONGOING</b>

Area	Activity	Target date	Current status	Resource requirement (officers)	Responsible officer	Completed date
			contributing to a closer working relationship between the two teams. <b>Funding has been provided for specialist fraud risk assessment training for one officer, this will take place in November.</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 against fraud where appropriate.	2-5	Shaun DUTTON	<b>ONGOING</b>
Blue Badge	Proactive fraud detection and deterrence exercise on Blue Badges	August 2023	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	TBA	This is in the planning stage and will be updated once the training package has been updated and APCOA have been consulted.	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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