

Appendix 1 – Case studies – fraud investigations 2024/25

1. Agency Staff Fraud Risks – Disciplinary Investigations

This case related to the Agency Staff Fraud Risks project undertaken through the London NFI Fraud Hub, where a pilot was undertaken across London Fraud Hub Authorities, working with our contingent worker providers to identify cases over multiple employment.

This match suggested that a permanent member of staff, a Porter on one of the City's housing estates had also been employed by a recruitment agency and that he was working at another London local authority.

An investigation commenced and dates, times, and hours worked were obtained and compared,

Further enquiries identified that the officer was regularly working six to seven days a week, with a minimum of 40hrs per week.

Timesheet data obtained from the other authority via their contingent worker contract shows that the officer had been working significant full-time hours for them.

Analysis shows that the officer worked fulltime hours the other authority for 15 weeks when they were supposed to be at work for City of London, and, therefore, could not have been fulfilling their duties or contracted hours.

Annual and sickness leave records were gathered and an analysis was undertaken against the timesheets, this showed that over seven days when the officer was off sick, they were working at the other authority.

ID documents confirmed that the worker was the same person.

The officer was interviewed under caution and was represented by a solicitor, at the beginning of the interview the solicitor read out a resignation letter on behalf of his client, tendering his resignation with immediate effect. A no comment interview followed this.

The overpaid salary was calculated at £8,650 and is subject to recovery action.

This data matching is now available as a key matching solution within Fraud Hub.

2. Pension in Payment to Deceased Pensioner

The National Fraud Initiative (NFI) is a powerful tool to identify fraud and error across the Public Sector, incorporating powerful data sets including deceased data from various sources.

This case was raised following a review of Pension to Deceased data matches identified by the NFI matching. The matching suggested that a pensioner in receipt of pension payments from the City of London passed away in 2021.

Payments were suspended and no contact was received from the pensioner. Enquiries were made with the General Records Office, but no trace of the death could be found.

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We identified that the Pensioner was a former tenant of Camden Council, and enquiries were made. These enquiries identified that Camden Council had a record of the death, had recovered the tenancy and cancelled the Pensioner's Council Tax liability.

Further enquires with Camden identified an Interim Death Certificate, which are not held by the General Records Office, and provided.

This confirmed that the data match was correct and allowed the City to end the pension and assess the value of pensions overpaid.

The value of the overpaid pension was calculated at £6,627, enquiries with the deceased pensioners bank confirmed that the pension payments made after the pensioner passed away were held, untouched, in their bank account, and as such recovery of the overpayment commenced and is in process.

3. Housing Application Fraud, Leading to Recovery of City of London Tenancy

This case was referred by the Housing Officer on the City's Southwark Estate due to rent arrears and the failure of the tenant to engage with the City of London. Credit checks carried out by the Counter Fraud team revealed that all the tenant's links are at a social housing address in Hackney, despite the City address allegedly being home only home.

Through liaison with peers in the Counter Fraud team at Hackney Council the team established that the tenant has large rent arrears with them and is in the process of being evicted. A review of the declarations made by the tenant during their application for housing with the City found that the tenant had, indeed, declared this address during their application, but failed to disclose the true circumstances around it, had they done so, they would have been ineligible for housing at the City and the application would have been cancelled.

Further intelligence enquiries suggested that the tenant had been sub-letting the property in Hackney since becoming a City of London housing tenant, whilst more detailed enquiries revealed that the tenant had made further false declarations surrounding their City connection, providing counterfeit employment documents, payslips and falsifying letters to give the impression that they had an eligible City connection.

The tenant was interviewed under caution admitting that they declared wrongful employment during the housing application, and admitted to providing false proof of employment proof however, they maintained that their work was still in The City boundaries at the time the application was made, providing a list of addresses where they work for their current employer.

Contact was made with the current employer, which identified that the locations declared for workplaces currently and previously were false, in fact none were within the square mile.

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The tenant had made several dishonest and duplicitous declarations and furnished false documents throughout the application process.

The tenant has been evicted from social housing with a criminal case to be heard in the Crown court.

4. Council Tax - Single Person Discount / Housing Application Fraud

This case was referred by the Housing Allocations Team. They received a Housing Application from a lady who claimed to have been living with a City of London Social Housing tenant at The Middlesex Street Estate since 2019. The lady claimed to be a lodger and not in a relationship with the tenant, who had a sole tenancy also beginning in 2019. Assessment officers from Housing Allocations team had concerns over how vague she was in response to questions asked.

Intelligence checks revealed that the tenant had claimed Single Person Discount at the property throughout his tenancy. Credit checks did not link the lady making the Housing Application from the address until this date period. This was also corroborated by the electoral roll registration at the address, utility bills and mobile phone usage. The lady making the application was linked to another property with someone who was identified as her ex-husband from 2019, the date she claimed to have moved to the property at Middlesex Street Estate and where she was making her application from.

As a result of the findings and after formal engagement with the lady, she withdrew her housing application, and the tenant had his single person discount removed from his council tax liability, creating an overpayment of £413.70 reclaimed in relation to 2023-24 and £439.80 for 2024-25. This has now been recovered from the resident