

# Investigation Team – Progress Report

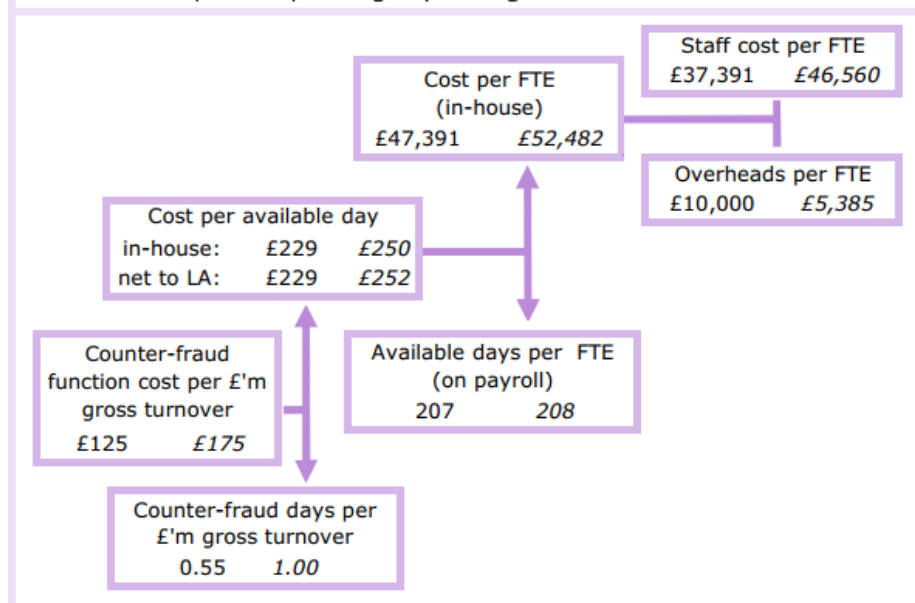
## Resources



The current Investigative resource is 2.5 FTE, the team's investigator left the Council on the 24<sup>th</sup> November 2017 and following a successful recruitment process, a new investigator has been appointed and should commence duties during February 2018.

In respect of resourcing, the current CIPFA counter fraud, benchmarking club states:

These tree diagrams display a number of key cost benchmarks. For each benchmark two figures are given, the first being the authority's value and the second (in italics) is the group average.



## Training

During November the Investigation Assistant attended the CIPFA, Accredited Counter Fraud Technician Training. The course examined the impact of fraud in the UK and included an overview of the civil and criminal justice systems. It focused on fraud awareness, how to gather evidence and how to obtain information without prejudicing any later investigation.

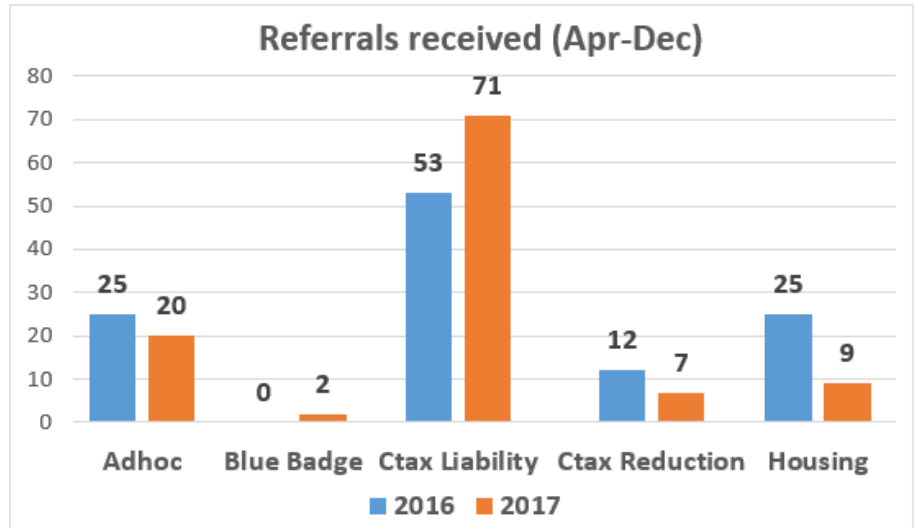
Thirty nine people attended the Disciplinary Policy, Investigating Officer training during quarter 3, 100% were satisfied with the training received. 19 people attended the Investigatory Interview note taker training, 100% were satisfied with the training.

## Policies and Procedures

A draft online investigations procedure has been produced and should be approved during quarter 4. A Counter Fraud Toolkit has been produced to assist staff and has been published on the Investigation Team's public SharePoint site.

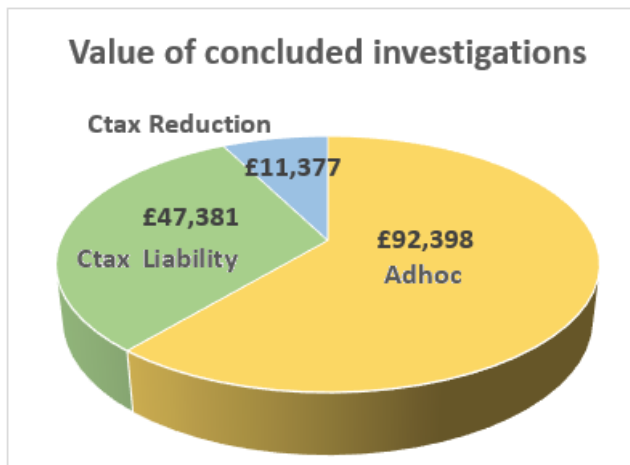
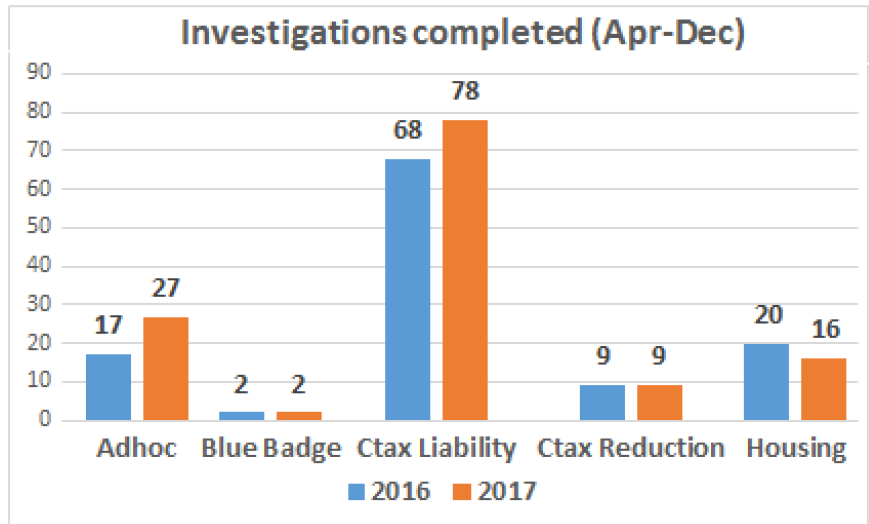
## Reactive - Referrals

109 referrals were received by the team, compared to 115 last year:



## Investigations concluded

132 cases were concluded with a value in excess of £150,000 compared to 116 cases last year for the same period:



Adhoc referrals relate to employee misconduct or allegations of fraud committed by external persons against the Council. Employee investigations may be led by the Investigation Team, or assistance / advice will be provided. It is a requirement that all officers who undertake the role of employee Investigating Officer attend the mandatory training delivered by the Investigation Team.

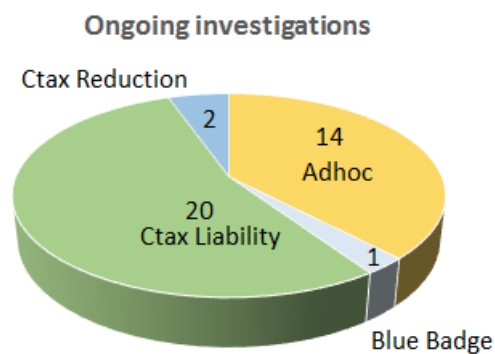
## Sanctions

During this quarter, three individuals have been cautioned as a result of committing fraud in respect of Council Tax discounts and one individual has been prosecuted as a result of illegally subletting their council house.

The Cabinet Office attributes a notional saving value of £93,000 for recovery of a social housing property (this figure is made up by calculating the temporary accommodation cost for genuine applicants, legal costs to recover the property, re-let costs and rent forgone during the void period between tenancies).

## Investigations ongoing

There are 37 ongoing investigations currently assigned to members of the investigation team:



## Data Matching



The annual National Fraud Initiative, data-matching exercise which matches Council Tax, Single Person Discount to Electoral Register data, was released in December and identifies 2,390 matches that require further interrogation by the Investigation Team.

Fighting Fraud and Corruption Locally is a strategy for English local authorities. This strategy is the result of an intensive period of research, surveys, face-to-face meetings and workshops. Local authorities have spoken openly about risks, barriers and what they feel is required to help them improve and continue the fight against fraud and to tackle corruption locally.

**Fighting  
Fraud &  
Corruption**  
LOCALLY

The strategy states that Local authorities should consider their performance against each of the following six themes:

<b>C</b> ulture	creating a culture in which beating fraud and corruption is part of daily business
<b>C</b> apability	ensuring that the range of counter fraud measures deployed is appropriate to the range of fraud risks
<b>C</b> ompetence	having the right skills and standards
<b>C</b> ommunication	raising awareness, deterring fraudsters, sharing information, celebrating successes
<b>C</b> apacity	deploying the right level of resources to deal with the level of fraud risk
<b>C</b> ollaboration	working together across internal and external boundaries: with colleagues, with other local authorities, and with other agencies; sharing resources, skills and learning, good practice and innovation, and information.

The Investigation Team is committed to the principles of the strategy and have developed an action plan in order to comply with best practice.