

## POLICY BULLETIN – 23 September 2009

### FEATURE TOPIC: Protecting the Public Purse – Local Government Fighting Fraud Report

A recent [report](#) by the Audit Commission examines key areas of fraud risk facing local authorities and highlights good practice examples in tackling the problem. Whilst it is acknowledged that councils and their partners have done much over recent years to address fraud, the Commission sets out three key areas where more could be done:

- Housing tenancy – Assuming a tenancy fraud level of 2.5 % in London and 1% elsewhere, it is estimated that available social housing for allocation could be reduced by nearly 50,000 properties (worth over £2 billion);
- Council tax – Fraudulent claims for the single person discount of 25% are estimated to cost tax payers £90m each year;
- Recruitment fraud related to false statements from applicants on application forms.

Other significant areas of fraudulent activity identified are housing and council tax benefit, procurement, social care direct payments, disabled parking concessions, insurance claims against councils, and abuse of position fraud. It is also noted that fraud is likely to increase due to the recession.

The report contains a number of recommendations for councils and government and includes a checklist to help councils consider their own arrangements. Among the recommendations councils are advised to reassess counter-fraud plans, policies and procedures to ensure that they are effective, up to date and in line with the latest guidance and good practice. Councils should also consider whether existing staff have been properly vetted and check recruitment procedures for new staff. A strong counter-fraud culture and zero tolerance approach are seen as key. Staff should be fully aware of whistleblowing policies and money laundering regulations and feel able to report any suspicions of fraudulent activity.

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### THEMATIC UPDATE:

#### Children, Young People and Families

##### Families at risk

DCSF produces [Think Family Toolkit](#) to improve support for families at risk.

Project in Leeds announced as one of [ten pilot areas](#) looking at coordination of support for families going through separation and divorce.

## **Free-D**

Government launches national [Free-D](#) initiative to provide young people with a safe place to debate and discuss key issues.

## **Communities, Neighbourhoods and Social Inclusion**

### **Economy and migration**

CLG publish [report](#) on the impact of migration on regional economic performance.

### **English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL)**

BIS publish [report](#) on guidance and examples from local authorities fast tracking the new approach to ESOL.

## **Free-D**

Government launches national [Free-D](#) initiative to provide young people with a safe place to debate and discuss key issues.

## **Hate crime**

Cross-Government [action plan](#) on hate crime is published.

## **Pledgebanks**

Findings from [desk research](#) on pledgebanks published.

## **Resilient communities**

[Report](#) published by the Risk and Regulation Advisory Council and the Talent and Enterprise Taskforce on improving the resilience of communities.

## **Rough Sleeping**

CLG publish [guidance](#) and [self-assessment tool](#) on preventing and tackling rough sleeping.

## **Social Return on Investment (SROI)**

OTS publishes [guides](#) on SROI.

## **Culture, Sport and the Olympics**

### **Museums and galleries**

Y&H museums and galleries to benefit from [£4m improvement fund](#).

### **UK City of Culture 2013**

[Five areas](#) in Yorkshire and Humber named as potential bidders to become the first UK City of Culture in 2013.

## **Democracy and Public Affairs**

### **Regional Grand Committees**

New [Regional Grand Committees](#) to meet for the first time in the Autumn.

## The Economy and SNR

### Economic downturn

A [report](#) published by the CBI shows how organisations have changed their working practices in response to the recession.

[Report](#) by the Economic and Social Research Council examines what can be learned from previous recessions.

### Economy and migration

CLG publish [report](#) on the impact of migration on regional economic performance.

### Future Jobs Fund

Successful second round FJF [awards](#) announced.

### Jobs of the future

Government's [Jobs of the Future](#) outlines where new jobs could be created in the future UK economy, how the labour market will change and potential employment opportunities.

### Mortgage help

Government launches [national campaign](#) to help people who are struggling with mortgage repayments.

### Sustainable construction

Progress [report](#) on the joint Government and industry strategy for sustainable construction is produced.

## Employment and Welfare

### Adult learning

Y&H projects to receive [£1.5m](#) from the Learning Revolution Transformation Fund to support innovative informal adult learning.

### Council Chief Executives' pay-offs

Audit Commission [calls for evidence](#) on regulation of financial settlements for council chief executives. The closing date for submissions is 2 October.

### Economic downturn

A [report](#) published by the CBI shows how organisations have changed their working practices in response to the recession.

### Employment support for carers

DWP [report](#) examines how caring responsibilities affect employment decisions and what employment support is needed for carers.

### Fair Treatment at Work Survey

[Report](#) on the findings from the 2008 FTWS is published.

### Future Jobs Fund

Successful second round FJF [awards](#) announced.

### **Jobs of the future**

Government's [Jobs of the Future](#) outlines where new jobs could be created in the future UK economy, how the labour market will change and potential employment opportunities.

### **Leave policies**

[Research](#) published by BIS examines international leave policies.

### **Pay and Work Rights helpline**

New single [helpline](#) launched for workers and employers seeking advice on workplace rights.

### **Pay Award 2009-2010**

Local Government Services [pay award](#) for 2009-2010 is agreed.

### **Union Modernisation Fund**

Successful [projects](#) for Round 3 of the UMF announced.

## **The Environment**

### **Landfill bans**

Defra [research](#) examines the experiences of other countries and regions that have imposed restrictions on landfill materials.

### **Personal carbon trading**

lppr [report](#) examines the case for personal carbon trading as a way of reducing personal carbon emissions.

## **Europe and International**

### **Landfill bans**

Defra [research](#) examines the experiences of other countries and regions that have imposed restrictions on landfill materials.

### **Leave policies**

[Research](#) published by BIS examines international leave policies.

## **Fire**

### **Fire Kills Media campaign**

CLG publish [report](#) on the impact of the campaign.

### **Operational guidance**

First [guidance documents](#) published as part of the review of FRS operational guidance.

### **Risk Assessments**

CLG [guide](#) produced on risk assessment tools, techniques and data.

## Health and Social Care

### Commissioning for carers

[Guide](#) published on commissioning of adult services that impact on carers.

### Employment support for carers

DWP [report](#) examines how caring responsibilities affect employment decisions and what employment support is needed for carers.

### Marmot Review

Summary [report](#) of responses to the first phase of the review of health inequalities consultation is published.

## Housing and Regeneration

### Affordable housing

Y&H to receive [£98m](#) for affordable housing following the mini-bid round from the National Affordable Housing Programme 2008-11.

Government announces [£245m](#) worth of funding to deliver a further 3,400 affordable homes.

### Council housing

Y&H to receive over [£26m](#) to help build more new council homes.

### Housing and the Credit Crunch

CLG issues follow up [response](#) to the Select Committee's recommendations on housing and the credit crunch.

### Housing development

LGA [report](#) showcases examples of councils supporting housing development during the recession.

### Mortgage help

Government launches [national campaign](#) to help people who are struggling with mortgage repayments.

### Rough sleeping

CLG publish [guidance](#) and [self-assessment tool](#) on preventing and tackling rough sleeping.

### Strategic housing

Audit Commission publish [report](#) on getting the best from strategic housing.

## Performance, Partnerships and Assessment

### Comprehensive Area Assessment

LGA [report](#) examines views and experiences of councils in implementing CAA.

### Public service regulators

SDC [reviews](#) how public service regulators in local government, health and education can regulate effectively for sustainable development.

## **Setting the pace consultation**

IDeA publishes responses to the [Setting the Pace](#) consultation and next steps from the Chair of the LGA Improvement Board.

## **Planning**

### **Nationally Significant Projects**

CLG issues [guidance](#) on associated development and [application form guidance](#) for nationally significant projects.

CLG publishes [summary of responses](#) to consultation, and [guidance](#) on pre-application consultation and application procedures for nationally significant projects.

### **Sustainable construction**

Progress [report](#) on the joint Government and industry strategy for sustainable construction is produced.

## **Police and Criminal Justice**

### **Hate crime**

Cross-Government [action plan](#) on hate crime is published.

### **Youth knife crime**

Home Office produces [report](#) containing practical advice on tackling youth knife crime (includes case studies from South and West Yorkshire).

## **Procurement and Commissioning**

### **Commissioning for carers**

[Guide](#) published on commissioning of adult services that impact on carers.

### **Procurement in professional services**

LGA produces members' [guide](#) on making savings through better procurement in professional services.

## **Third Sector**

### **Social Return on Investment (SROI)**

OTS publishes [guides](#) on SROI.

## **Transport**

### **Bus services**

Oxera [report](#) commissioned by LGA examines the existing bus subsidy system and how better value for money and outcomes could be achieved.

### **Tram-train trial**

[Proposals](#) to trial the first tram-trains service in South Yorkshire.

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## STATISTICAL UPDATE:

### Child protection

Latest [figures](#) on referrals and assessments of children subject to a child protection plan or on the child protection register.

### Homelessness

Homelessness [figures](#) for April-June 2009 released.

### Local government finance

Latest provisional [outturn estimates](#) of local authority revenue expenditure and financing for 2008-09 are released.

2nd provisional [outturn figures](#) of local authority capital expenditure and receipts for 2008-09 are released.

Latest [data](#) released on national non-domestic rates collected by local authorities.

### National Indicator 186

[CO2 emissions](#) for 2007 and revised estimates for 2006 and 2007 by region and local authority area are published.

### National School Survey

Audit Commission publish [results](#) of 2009 National School Survey.

### Rough sleepers

Rough sleeping total street count [figures](#) for 2009 by local authority are published.

### Sports participation

Sport England publishes latest quarterly [results](#) for the Active People Survey 3.

### Teachers Workloads

[Results](#) of Teachers' Workloads Diary Survey 2009 are published.

### Transport

Dft publish bus and light rail [statistics](#) for Quarter 2 2009.

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This policy bulletin provides a round-up of key policy documents, announcements, publications and research relevant to the work of Local Government Yorkshire and Humber. It provides links to the source information for further consideration. We hope you find the information useful.

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Local Government Yorkshire and Humber (LGYH) is the regional partnership of local authorities, including fire and police authorities across the region. It brings local authorities together on key issues, supports the improvement of service delivery, lobbies Government on the future of local government, promotes good employment practices, and works with local authorities to improve the public perception of local government.

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