

# *Benefit Fraud*

## **Local Authority Benefit Fraud Conference 2008**

### **The changing framework for local authority benefit fraud investigation**

**Thursday 6th November 2008**

**Local Government House, Smith Square, Westminster SW1P 3HZ**

Local authority benefit fraud teams work within a changing framework of legislation, guidance and policy objectives. This one-day conference brings together the key issues for benefit fraud teams in 2008 and provides a forum for examining the implementation of recent legislation and the sharing of good practice in response to changes.

The conference will examine new ways of working in response to recent legislation including the use of financial investigators under the Criminal Justice Act and Proceeds of Crime Act and joint prosecutions under the Welfare Reform Act. In addition the conference will examine the proposed regulation changes around internet and telecommunications access under RIPA and the current view of the Office of the Data Commissioner on data exchange for fraud investigation purposes.

Local authority benefit fraud teams also need to consider revised ways of working and performance measurement. The conference will examine the introduction of Key Lines of Enquiry (KLoEs), the move towards larger corporate fraud teams and the introduction in anti-fraud work of new technology such as Voice Risk Analysis.

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## WHO SHOULD ATTEND

- Fraud Managers and Officers
- Benefit Fraud Managers
- Benefit Managers responsible for fraud
- Revenues Managers responsible for fraud
- Treasurers
- Auditors
- Local Authority Corporate Fraud Managers

## REGISTRATION

### Online

You can register for this conference online at [www.psstrategies.co.uk](http://www.psstrategies.co.uk)

### Fax / Post

Please complete the enclosed booking form and fax, email or post it to the address shown on the form.

Further booking forms are available from the conference administration team on 01483 203536 or by emailing [benedictbr@btinternet.com](mailto:benedictbr@btinternet.com)

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## SPEAKERS INCLUDE

- Sally Gubbins, NFI Co-ordinator, Audit Commission
- James Ablewhite, Lead on VRA, Local Authority Performance Division, Department for Work and Pensions
- Alison Wellens, Head of Data Protection Practice Public Sector, Data Protection Practice Team, Information Commissioner's Office
- Malcolm Gardner, Counter Fraud Group and Consultant, Meritec
- Dave Wright, Benefit Fraud Investigation Manager, Trafford Metropolitan Borough Council
- Kim Neal, Barrister
- Darren Walklate, Managing Consultant, Meritec
- Diane Baker, Fraud and Investigations Manager, Peterborough City Council

## MORNING PROGRAMME

10.30 **Chair's Introduction and Welcome**

10.35 **Financial Investigation for Local Authority Fraud**

Dave Wright, Benefit Fraud Investigation Manager,  
Trafford Metropolitan Borough Council

Financial investigation, under the Criminal Justice Act and Proceeds of Crime Act, is used to scrutinise financial irregularities alongside criminal investigation. It is being considered as a tool by many local authority benefit fraud teams. A few authorities, including Trafford, currently use trained financial investigators within their anti-fraud work. In this session Dave Wright sets out the importance of financial investigation and its uses to local authority fraud teams. The presentation will also look at the effectiveness of financial investigation, why it is a good shared service opportunity and why financial directors and elected members are supportive.

11.00 **Local Authority Led HB/CTB & DWP Benefit Prosecutions  
- the early lessons**

Kim Neal, Barrister

The Welfare Reform Act came into force in April 2008. This gave local authority fraud teams the power to investigate and prosecute HB/CTB cases where certain DWP benefits were also in payment. The first local authority led HB/CTB plus DWP benefit cases have now been prosecuted and this session looks at the early lessons to be learnt, the advantages of the new way of working, the impact on local authority resources and the impact on sentencing by the Courts.

11.25 **Questions**

11.35 **The Introduction of KLoEs and their Relevance to Fraud**

Darren Walklate, Managing Consultant, Meritec

Key Lines of Enquiries (KLoEs) are designed to provide inspectors, inspected bodies and others with a framework through which to view and assess services. This presentation will provide an overview of the new KLoEs and will focus on the impact on local authority fraud teams and how fraud teams can ensure that they are KLoE friendly.

## MORNING PROGRAMME

12.00 **Questions**

12.05 **Refreshments**

12.20 **Corporate Fraud Teams – the future for local authority fraud investigation?**

Diane Baker, Fraud and Investigations Manager,  
Peterborough City Council

Corporate fraud teams are becoming an increasingly popular model for local authorities. In this model, all council anti-fraud activities are incorporated within one central team. This presentation will set out the advantages of a corporate fraud model which enables benefit fraud awareness to develop into a key driver of corporate anti-fraud initiatives. It will also set out the challenges and processes involved in developing a benefit fraud team model into a wider corporate model.

12.45 **Questions**

12.50 **The National Anti-Fraud Initiative 2008**

Sally Gubbins, NFI Co-ordinator, Audit Commission

Since 1996 the Audit Commission has run the National Fraud Initiative (NFI), This session provides an update on this year's NFI programme including the Audit Commission's Code of Data Matching Practice 2008 and the 2008/09 programme.

1.10 **Questions**

1.15 **Lunch**

## AFTERNOON PROGRAMME

### 2.00 **Voice Risk Analysis – an aid in combating fraud?**

James Ablewhite, Lead on VRA, Local Authority Performance Division,  
Department for Work and Pensions (DWP)

The use of Voice Risk Analysis software is now being used by a number of authorities to assist in combating fraud. This presentation will provide a view on the uses of Voice Risk Analysis (VRA) for interviewers and investigators for both benefits validation purposes and within fraud detection processes.

### 2.25 **Questions**

### 2.35 **Data Handling and Exchange – guidance in the light of recent technological advances**

Alison Wellens, Head of Data Protection Practice Public Sector,  
Data Protection Practice Team, Information Commissioner's Office

Technical advances in computers and telecommunications allow further access to data and increased facilities for matching of data – these are used by authorities to help combat fraud. This raises questions of compatibility with current data protection legislation which has recently been discussed in Parliament. This address will provide guidance from the Information Commissioner's office on the limits to data usage, exchange and matching for anti-fraud purposes.

### 3.00 **Questions**

## AFTERNOON PROGRAMME

3.10 **Data Access and Security – Current Practitioner Issues:  
Accessing Personal Internet and Text Data under RIPA  
& Ensuring Security of Data**

Malcolm Gardner, Counter Fraud Group and Consultant, Meritec

Local authorities, as well as other public bodies, will be given power to access details of personal text, emails and internet usage under Home Office proposals published in August 2008. In addition, the government is planning to introduce a communications bill in the autumn of 2008 requiring telecommunication companies to provide data to a central data store which may be accessed by police and public bodies. This will have obvious implications for fraud investigation. This session looks at these new proposals and the likely effect on local authority fraud investigation. It will also address issues around information security – a very high profile issue following recent data losses by public bodies.

3.35 **Questions**

3.45 **Chair's Conclusion**

3.50 **Conference Close**

## PSS

Public Sector Strategies has been facilitating and producing conferences for the public sector since 1994, often in partnership with local government and central government agencies and departments. For a list of forthcoming events please visit [www.PSSstrategies.co.uk](http://www.PSSstrategies.co.uk)

## Counter-Fraud Group (CFG)

The counter-fraud group (CFG) has been in existence since 1996. Initially set up as a small email distribution list to allow fraud investigators to exchange good practice and information, it now has over 400 members across local government and the private sector. CFG works in partnership with other bodies such as Public Sector Strategies, The Kier Group, LGA, CIPFA and the Association of Certified Fraud Examiners to aid fraud investigators through good practice guidance, information exchange and high quality training.

[www.counterfraudgroup.co.uk](http://www.counterfraudgroup.co.uk)

## Conference Objectives

- To examine the key legislative, technological and good practise issues affecting local authority benefit fraud teams.
- To look at the introduction of financial investigation into local authority anti-fraud work and the use of accredited financial investigators under the Criminal Justice Act and Proceeds of Crime Act.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of the first local authority led prosecutions for HB/CTB and DWP benefit cases following the Welfare Reform Act which came into force in April 2008.
- To provide an understanding of Key lines of Enquiry (KLoEs) as measures of performance and the impact of the introduction of KLoEs on local authority fraud teams.
- To examine the move within local authorities towards corporate fraud teams and the advantages and challenges of this model.
- To provide an update and clarification of the 2008/09 National Fraud Initiative (NFI) programme and an overview of the Audit Commission's Code of Data Matching Practice 2008.
- To evaluate the impact of new technology in combating fraud, specifically the use of Voice Risk Analysis.
- To provide an insight into the framework for data handling, matching and exchange taking account of new advances in telecommunications and the August 2008 proposals to allow public bodies access to telecommunication and internet data under RIPA.

## Further Information

For further information on this, or other Public Sector Strategy (PSS) conferences, please telephone PSS on **0118 933 2636** or email [info@PSSstrategies.co.uk](mailto:info@PSSstrategies.co.uk). For booking queries please contact Benedict Business Resources on 01483 203536.