

MALICIOUS ALLEGATION POLICY

(POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE REPORT 463-2007)

It is important to be aware that the Council can receive anonymous allegations which are totally without foundation and, although the Council has a duty to protect the public purse, it must also ensure that it maintains a high standard of integrity in how it actions allegations against individuals. For this reason the following action should be taken when an anonymous allegation is received

Action to be taken

- Risk Assessment carried out on referral to determine how it should be actioned (see Risk Assessment Outcome Categories below)
- Referrals referred to Fraud Officers will be investigated to establish if there is any truth to the allegation
- In cases where fraud or claimant error is not established this is recorded
- Referrals will be checked against these records to ensure that where previous investigations found that the allegation was unfounded no action will be taken unless there is significant new information or a different allegation

The Council has a duty to protect the public purse and therefore is required to investigate allegations that it receives. Initial enquiries will quickly establish whether there is any truth to the allegation.

Risk Assessment Outcome Categories

Allegation received with sufficient detail to enable an investigation to proceed

Refer to the relevant Counter-Fraud Officer to verify the true facts and investigate further where appropriate.

Allegation received without sufficient detail to enable an investigation to proceed

Refer to the Council's Liaison Section to visit and ascertain if there are any changes to that individual's circumstances that may affect the benefit.

No benefit or discount

No further action

Discount Only

Refer to the Council's Liaison Section to visit and ascertain if there are any changes to that individual's circumstances that may affect the discount.

Other

Refer to the Counter-Fraud Supervisor to assess content of information and determine the appropriate section to action the change

Counter-Fraud Officers and Visiting Officers need to be aware of the sensitive nature of their cases and treat the public with the respect and care they would expect themselves whether there is a suspected benefit offence or not.