

DUNDEE CITY COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Personnel and Management Services Committee - 30 June 2003

REPORT ON: Finance Department - Revenues Division - Establishment of Additional Post (Specialist Investigations Officer)

REPORT BY: Director of Finance and Director of Personnel and Management Services

REPORT NO: 460-2003

1 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 This report proposes the establishment of an additional post of Special Investigations Officer in the Finance Department.

2 RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 It is recommended that the Committee approves the establishment of one post of Specialist Investigations Officer, graded AP3/4 (£17,340 - £21,732).

3 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 The maximum cost of employing this member of staff in a full financial year will be £21,103. However, it is anticipated that this post will be fully self-funding within three years. During the interim period any additional costs will be contained within the Revenues Division's approved revenue budget. The additional Council income will be generated due to the resulting increase in Administrative Cautions, Administrative Penalties and Prosecutions, all of which attract financial incentive rewards and also from the recovery of liquid assets where it can be shown that the individual could not have obtained the asset without the financial assistance of benefit award received fraudulently.

4 LOCAL AGENDA 21 IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 None.

5 EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 None.

6 BACKGROUND AND PROPOSALS

- 6.1 The Proceeds of Crime Act (Scotland) 1995 and the Proceeds of Crime Act 2002 introduced Proceeds of Crime Powers and allow Councils to implement Financial Investigations.
- 6.2 The Social Security Administration Act 1992, as amended by the Fraud Act 2001, introduced Authorised Officer Powers, which allow Councils access to information held by organisations such as banks, building societies and credit companies in respect of individuals who are suspected of committing Benefit Fraud.
- 6.3 It is anticipated that the establishment of a post with Authorised Officer Powers would increase the quality of evidence gathered in fraud cases, resulting in an increase in Administrative Cautions, Administrative Penalties and Prosecutions, all of which attract financial incentive rewards.
- 6.4 Good practice dictates that the Authorised Officer be independent from the decision-making process of the Finance Revenues Division, and the authorisation process must be strictly controlled to ensure that the Council only requests this information where legislation allows.
- 6.5 It is proposed to establish a post of Specialist Investigations Officer, graded AP3/4 (£17,340 - £21,732), which will be delegated Authorised Officer Powers on behalf of the Council.

7 CONSULTATION

- 7.1 The Chief Executive, Directors of Support Services and Personnel and Management Services have been consulted on this report. The Trade Unions have been consulted and no comments have been received.

8 BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 8.1 No background papers, as defined by Section 50D of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 (other than containing confidential or exempt information) were relied on to any material extent in preparing the above report.

D.K. Dorward
Director of Finance

24 June 2003

J.C. Petrie
Director of Personnel and Management Services

24 June 2003