

National Fraud Initiative 2010-11

The Audit Commission will be undertaking the NFI data matching exercise for 2010-11 during this autumn. Charnwood, as a local authority, is legally required to participate in the exercise by submitting specified data to the Commission to assist in the prevention and detection of fraud.

As a local authority we are required by law to protect the public funds we administer. In order to prevent and detect fraud, we may share information provided to us with other bodies responsible for auditing or administering public funds.

The Audit Commission acts as our external auditor, and is also responsible for carrying out data matching exercises.

Data matching involves comparing computer records held by one organisation against other computer records held by the same organisation and others to see how far they match. The records involved usually contain personal information. Computerised data matching allows potentially fraudulent claims and payments to be identified. Where a match is found it indicates that there is an inconsistency which requires further investigation. No assumption can be made as to whether there is fraud, error or other explanation until an investigation is carried out.

We are required to provide the following sets of data to the Audit Commission for matching for the exercise,

- Payroll
- Trade Creditors
- Housing and Council Tax benefits (data provided by the DWP)
- Housing
- Insurance Claimants (data provided by the Council's insurers)
- Transport Passes and Permits (Concessionary Travel & Residents Parking)
- Licences (personal (for supply of alcohol), taxi drivers & market traders/operators)
- Council Tax (to be provided in 2011)
- Electoral Register (to be provided 2011)

Further details of the data required to be provided in each set can be found on the Audit Commission's NFI website, which can be found at

<http://www.auditcommission.gov.uk/nfi/instructions/datarequirements/pages/localgovernmentdatarequirements.aspx>

The data will be submitted to the Audit Commission via a secure electronic upload facility (DFU) directly by the Council. The facility is contained within the existing NFI secure web application; it features encryption and enables password protection to provide a controlled access environment. Data will not be provided by any other means.

The use of data by the Audit Commission in a data matching exercise is carried out with statutory authority under its powers in Part 2A of the Audit Commission Act 1998. It does not require the consent of the individuals concerned under the Data Protection Act 1998.

Data matching by the Audit Commission is subject to a Code of Practice. This may be found at:

<http://www.auditcommission.gov.uk/nfi/pages/codeofdatamatchingpractice.aspx>

For further information on the Audit Commission's legal powers and the reasons why it matches particular information, see:

http://www.auditcommission.gov.uk/nfi/fairprocessing/pages/level3fulltext_copy.aspx

For further information on data matching at this Council contact the Performance & Audit Team on 01509 634573 or at nfi@charnwood.gov.uk