

## FRAUD, CORRUPTION AND FINANCIAL IRREGULARITIES – RESULTS OF CASES CLOSED 2018/19

| Offence/irregularity, sanctions and redress  | Key outstanding actions |
|--|-------------------------|
| <p><b>Tenancy:</b></p> <p>1. <b>(0668) Suspected subletting:</b> Referred by housing with concerns that tenant has moved away and left adult son in property. Investigation checks and out of hours visits confirmed tenant's links to West Sussex where she has a joint tenancy with her partner and is registered for council tax. Further investigations found a subtenant, not a relative, had been recently evicted and a witness statement was taken confirming tenant did not reside in the property. Notices served but no contact from tenant. Following lengthy legal proceedings vacant possession was obtained and property released for others in need of social housing.</p>                   | None                    |
| <p>2. <b>(2768) False succession claim:</b> Referral from housing with concerns over whether applicant met the succession criteria. Applicant claimed to be tenant's partner. Investigations carried, but partner had no link to the address, they were not declared on the tenant's HB claim and SPD was in place on the council tax account. Notices served and following further legal action the court awarded possession to the Council and property was released for others in need of social housing.</p>   | None                    |
| <p>3. <b>(2915) Suspected subletting:</b> Referred by housing with concerns that tenant is not living in the property and is subletting his one bedroomed property. Credit checks carried out which confirmed other names linked to the property. Early morning visit found a male, not the tenant, in occupation who said he was decorating the property. On leaving a neighbour mentioned that two women lived in the property and both had left for work that morning. Information passed back to housing who served Notices on the tenant and subtenants. Following further legal action the court awarded possession to the Council and property was released for others in need of social housing.</p> | None                    |
| <p>4. <b>(3578) Suspected abandonment:</b> Referred by PA Housing as no contact with tenant and post had not been collected from the communal post box and rent arrears were accumulating. Visits undertaken whilst no response achieved there was evidence that someone may have entered the property. Information received that tenant has an Australian passport. Background checks undertaken but no evidence of others linked to the property and no alternative address for the tenant obtained. Notice served with no response and following further legal action vacant possession obtained and property was released for others in need of social housing.</p>                                      | None                    |

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| 5. <b>(3633) Suspected Abandonment:</b> Referred by housing management suspecting that tenant had moved away. Investigation enquiries confirmed an address in Humberside supported by financial spend activity in that area. Property visited and a male who claimed to be the tenant's son seen. He claimed to live there with the tenant who was away visiting sick relatives in Leeds. Tenant requested to attend for formal interview during which they claimed that they were looking after sick relatives but acknowledge they did not intend to return so returned the property which was released for others in need of social housing. | None   |
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| 6. <b>(3984) False succession claim:</b> Referred by housing, tenant's son applied for succession stating he had been resident for relevant period of time. Investigations identified that he had been registered at other addresses and did not meet the eligibility requirement. Once the evidence was seen by the applicant he withdrew his claim. Property recovered and released for others in need of social housing.   | None   |
| 7. <b>(4033) Subletting:</b> Referral from Housing. Allegation of abandonment with reported drug usage/dealing at property by third parties. Investigation identified sub-letting of property. Via Gum Tree, and during investigation tenant was arrested, and jailed, for drug dealing. Property recovered.  | None   |
| 8. <b>(4331) Abandonment:</b> Allegation of abandonment, but initial attempts to contact tenant resulted in daughter claiming her mother was staying with her while she recovered from a broken wrist. Checks established that tenant has returned to Iraq, and had been out of country for a year. Housing Benefit cancelled and property recovered.   | None   |
| 9. <b>(4519) False Succession:</b> Following death of tenant, son tried claiming succession to property. Investigation identified that that son had not been living at property, but at an address in Wimbledon for last 3 years. Succession denied and property recovered.   | None   |
| 10. <b>(4970) Abandonment:</b> Notification received from HB team that they had been advised that tenant had been moved into a rehab centre in Wales and would be there for 12-18 months. Checks carried out confirmed this and NTQ documentation was completed. Property recovered.  | None   |
| <b>Right to Buy:</b><br>11. During April 33 RTB applications have been reviewed. Priority is given to applications where the tenants are receiving Housing Benefit. Following intervention, including visits,   | The SWLFP continues to review right to buy applications referred and carry out visits or |

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| <p>14 referrals have been closed with no further action required and 9 referrals have been closed with the applicants withdrawing their RTB application (3143, 3414, 3492, 3676, 3870, 3871, 4149, 4383 &amp; 4567). Work is ongoing for the remaining 10 referrals, with applicants' details being cross-checked with other Council systems and visits being arranged where needed.</p>   | <p>interviews with applicants to help validate their application</p> |
| <p><b>Corporate Internal</b></p> <p>12. <b>(1138) Employee, false timesheets:</b> Management referral as a sessional worker suspected of submitting inflated timesheets. Investigation confirmed instances of inflated timesheets and officer requested to attend a formal interview. At interview, whilst initially denying that timesheets had been inflated, when confronted with evidence obtained, they accepted that there had been occasions where times claimed were incorrect. Being a sessional worker call upon their service was ended. Case considered for further action but unable to progress as officer moved with no forwarding details.</p> <p>13. <b>(3609) Possible abuse of a position:</b> Officer sought a placement for a relative who was later confirmed as not being RBK's responsibility. Council accepted that the officer only acted in the best interest of the relative so no further action taken. Placement cost is being confirmed and will be recharged.</p> <p>14. <b>(3924) Agency Worker False Representation:</b> It has been identified that the subject has failed to declare previous convictions for fraud and had produced a forged letter of reference whilst applying for employment. The worker's contract was terminated, and the matter was reported to the Police. SWLFP await the Police decision and the matter is still ongoing terminated.</p> | <p>None</p> <p>None</p> <p>None</p>                                  |
| <p><b>Corporate External</b></p> <p>15. <b>CTR and SPD Fraud and Abuse:</b> During 2018/19 the SWLFP have reviewed 100 applications for CTR and/or SPD where there has been suspicions that claimants have made false statements or withheld material information to secure a benefit or discount that they would not be entitled to. Where other national benefits are involved case are offered for joint working with the DWP. Following investigations, 63 referrals have been closed with no further action required and 16 referrals (0773, 0935, 3311, 3451, 3514, 3562, 3645, 3568, 3883, 3949, 3951, 3971, 4322, 4511, 4785 &amp; 4920) have been closed with the</p>   | <p>None</p>  |

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| <p>claimants benefit or discount being withdraw and arrangements put in place to recover amounts owed totalling £20,637. In one instance the claimant was issued with an administrative penalty in addition to having to repay the value of discount received that they were not entitled to. 21 referrals are still being examined.</p>  | None                    |
| <p>16. <b>(4271) Freedom Pass:</b> Referral from another local authority fraud team raising a concern over potential misuse of a Kingston issued Freedom Pass. Investigation confirmed that the holder of the Freedom Pass was a former borough resident but had moved away so should have surrendered the pass and applied for a new one from the borough that they now reside within. The pass was recovered and cancelled.</p> | None                    |
| <p>17. <b>(4761) Blue Badge Misuse:</b> During pro-active drive to identify Blue Badge abuse, a vehicle was seen arriving and parking near Town Hall. Driver, and sole occupant of vehicle, displayed no signs of disability and upon return to vehicle the driver was challenged. Badge identified as being issued to driver's wife. Badge seized and driver cautioned.</p>  | None                    |
| <p>18. <b>(4159, 4710) Schools Admissions:</b> Two cases of individuals using other family members addresses to try and gain school places for their children at preferred schools. Investigations identified true home addresses of individuals and applications rejected and children placed in schools within the catchment area of their actual home address.</p>   | None                    |

### Glossary

|     |                           |       |                                     |
|-----|---------------------------|-------|-------------------------------------|
| CTR | Council Tax Reduction     | DWP   | Department for Work and Pensions    |
| HB  | Housing Benefit           | PA    | Paragon and Area Housing            |
| RBK | Royal Borough of Kingston | RTB   | Right to Buy                        |
| SPD | Single Person Discount    | SWLFP | South West London Fraud Partnership |