

FOI 532/2016

REQUEST

What are the council's:

- estimations of money lost/or overpaid to both housing benefit and council tax benefit fraud over past year.
- estimations of money lost/or overpaid to both housing benefit and council tax benefit fraud over each of past five years.
- The number of prosecutions and the amount of money recovered over past year from successful housing benefit and council tax fraud prosecutions - with a breakdown of amount of money recovered.
- The number of prosecutions and the amount of money recovered over each of past five years from successful housing benefit and council tax fraud prosecutions - with a breakdown of amount of money recovered.
- Next year's projections of losses to be incurred by the council from council tax and housing benefit fraud.

RESPONSE

Further to your FOI request submitted on 29 October, please find below the answers to your questions:-

Housing Benefit Fraud transferred to the Single Fraud Investigation Service at the Department for Work and Pensions on the 1st November 2015. Therefore limited information is available relating to HB up until this date and nothing since this date is recorded by this local Authority, therefore I am unable to provide estimates.

Estimations of money lost/or overpaid to both housing benefit and council tax benefit fraud over each of past five years

2011/12 – £282,667 no split available

2012/13 – £293,898 no split available

2013/14 - £190,623 no split available

2014/15 - £45,077 CTAX £202,597 HB totals £247,674

2015/16 - £10,993 CTAX £127,361 HB totals £138,354

The number of prosecutions and the amount of money recovered over past year from successful housing benefit – this information is not held by the Authority.

There have not been any council tax fraud prosecutions in this current financial year to date for 2016/17.

The number of prosecutions are detailed below for each of the financial years requested, the amount of money recovered over each of past five years from successful housing benefit and council tax fraud prosecutions is not available as this information is not recorded.

2011/12 – 26 cases

2012/13 – 18 cases

2013/14 – 13 cases

2014/15 – 8 cases

2015/16 – 2 cases

Next years projections for Council Tax Fraud are to have up to 10 successful prosecutions, there are no projections for the amount of money this may involve as each case can vary considerably.