

<b>FOI REF:</b>	16688
<b>RESPONSE SENT:</b>	03/03/2026

## Request

Please provide the following information in relation to investigations undertaken by your Corporate Anti-Fraud Team (CAFT) or equivalent function.

Unless otherwise stated, please provide the information broken down by financial year (2022/23, 2023/24, 2024/25), and in aggregated form only. I do not require the creation of new datasets or narrative explanation beyond information already held in recorded form.

### 1. Volume of investigations

For each financial year, the total number of Corporate Anti-Fraud investigations commenced.

### 2. Subject type, outcome and challenge (combined)

For investigations concluded in each financial year, please provide a breakdown by subject category as recorded, by outcome, and by whether the investigation was subsequently challenged or reviewed, using the Council's recorded terms.

#### 2.1 Subject categories may include (but are not limited to):

- Individual (private person)
- Council officer
- Elected member
- External organisation or company
- Charity, voluntary, community, or not-for-profit organisation (including informal or constituted community groups)

#### 2.2 Other (please specify category used)

- Outcomes may include (but are not limited to):
- No further action
- Allegation not substantiated
- Allegation substantiated
- Partial substantiation



- Referral to another body
- Other outcome (please specify category used)

### 2.3 Challenge status (where recorded):

- Not challenged
- Subject to internal review, appeal, or complaint
- Subject to external challenge (e.g. Ombudsman, court, tribunal, regulator)

### 2.4 Where challenges occurred, please state how many resulted in:

- Findings upheld
- Findings amended
- Findings withdrawn or set aside
- If multiple subject categories apply to a single investigation, please count the investigation once under each applicable category and make this clear.

### 3. Investigations involving external organisations

For investigations involving external organisations or companies, please state how many involved entities that were:

- In receipt of council funding or grants
- In a contractual relationship with the council
- Operating in partnership with the council
- None of the above (external only)

### 4. Procedural safeguards: right of reply and disclosure (combined)

Where recorded, please state for each financial year:

4.1 How many investigations concluded without the subject being given a formal right of reply prior to findings being issued.

4.2 How many investigations included a formal right of reply process.

4.3 How many investigation outcomes were:

- Shared with third parties outside the council; and/or
- Published or circulated publicly.

4.4 Of those shared or published, how many were shared or published before the subject was given a right of reply.

### 5. Duration of investigations

For Corporate Anti-Fraud investigations commenced or concluded in each financial year, please provide the following where recorded:



5.1 The shortest, longest, and average duration of investigations, measured in calendar days, from:

date investigation commenced to date findings were issued or the investigation was formally closed.

5.2 The number of investigations falling within the following duration bands:

- Less than 3 months
- 3–6 months
- 6–12 months
- 12–18 months
- Over 18 months

5.3 The number of investigations exceeding 12 months in duration.

5.4 Where investigations exceeded 12 months, the number where your records indicate the following (counts only, no narrative required):

- Case complexity
- External dependency (e.g. bank, third party, police)
- Resource constraints
- Suspension pending other proceedings
- Other recorded reason (please specify category used)

5.5 Where recorded, how many investigations exceeded 12 months and concluded with findings that were shared with third parties or published.

6. Cost of investigations and financial recoveries

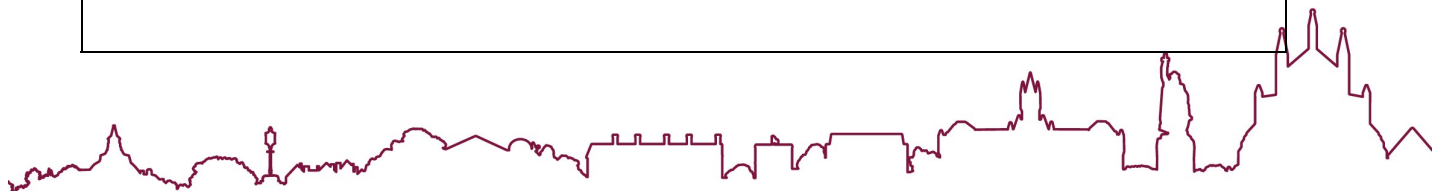
For each financial year, please state where recorded:

6.1 The total aggregated cost of Corporate Anti-Fraud investigations, including staff time and external costs (e.g. legal, forensic, consultancy), expressed as a total annual figure.

6.2 The total financial recoveries, repayments, or income returned to the council as a result of Corporate Anti-Fraud investigations.

6.3 Where recorded, whether recovered sums were:

- Repaid to the council's general fund
- Repaid to a specific service or grant budget
- Recovered on behalf of an external body
- Aggregated figures only are sufficient.



**Response**

The council does not have an in-house anti-fraud team. The council is a Stakeholder Partner in the Southern Internal Audit Partnership and this audit team has a specialist counter fraud team who undertake any fraud or irregularity investigation work. Housing Benefit fraud is referred to the DWP's national counter fraud team. The council also takes part in the National Fraud Initiative (NFI).

In the period specified, there has been one investigation of alleged fraud. The outcome of this work has been publically reported by the internal and external auditor. Details can be found on the council's website here:

Internal Audit Progress report:

<https://democracy.winchester.gov.uk/documents/s34017/AG180%20-%20WCC%20Internal%20Audit%20Progress%...>

External Auditor's Annual Report:

<https://democracy.winchester.gov.uk/documents/s34022/AG175%2024-25%20Auditors%20Annual%20Report.pdf>

24/25 External Auditor's Annual Results Report:

<https://democracy.winchester.gov.uk/documents/s34014/AG174%202024-25%20Auditors%20Annual%20Results%...>

