

Public Audit and Post-Legislative Scrutiny Committee  
National Fraud Initiative  
Submission from North Ayrshire Council

<p>What have been the benefits, financial and otherwise, of putting the National Fraud Initiative on a statutory footing?</p>	<p>Increased participation and therefore potentially better outcomes.</p> <p>The NFI is also likely to act as a deterrent to those who may consider fraudulent activity as it increases the likelihood of being caught and so it is important that there is publicity around the outcomes.</p> <p>However it should also be noted that the financial return from the NFI is very low in relation to the time invested in submitting data and investigating potential data matches.</p>
<p>Could the legislation be strengthened in any way?</p>	<p>Timescales for the investigation of potential data matches could be shortened – at present, public bodies are given 12 months after the release of data matches to investigate and close these off.</p> <p>The role of DWP in investigating potential Housing Benefit matches requires to be clarified following the introduction of the Single Fraud Investigation Service (SFIS).</p>
<p>Could participation in the National Fraud Initiative be improved? Are there any bodies who do not participate in the National Fraud Initiative who should do so?</p>	<p>Any new public bodies created through the devolution of financial powers to the Scottish Government should be included if they are not already.</p> <p>The NFI and its benefits should be publicised to other bodies and organisations that may wish to participate on a voluntary basis, in order to increase participation.</p>
<p>Are there any other issues you would like to raise in connection to this particular part of the legislation?</p>	<p>No further comments.</p>

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22/03/2017