



Transparency Code – Avon Fire Authority Fraud Report 2017- 2018

Avon Fire Authority (operationally known as Avon Fire & Rescue Service) is a public authority and expects the highest standards of conduct and integrity from its Members, employees and from all who have dealings with it. The Authority recognises the importance of these standards and the high expectations of the public in this respect.

The Authority acknowledges the responsibility it has for the administration of public funds and places great importance upon probity, financial control and honest administration. The Authority’s arrangements for the prevention and detection of fraud and corruption will be kept under review, suspected irregularities will be vigorously pursued and all appropriate action will be taken.

The Fire Authority has a [confidential reporting code and guidance](#) which sets out a procedure on how to raise concerns of a serious nature. The Authority’s [anti-fraud and anti-corruption strategy and response plan](#) focuses specifically on procedures for dealing with allegations of financial irregularities and is intended to:

- encourage prevention
- promote detection
- identify a clear pathway for investigation

Acts of dishonesty within the Avon Fire Authority / Avon Fire & Rescue Service are extremely rare. This reflects the skills, dedication and decency of Authority Members, employees and others with whom the Authority has dealings. However, constant vigilance is necessary to ensure that this good record is maintained.

Review Period: 1 st April 2017 to 31 st March 2018	TOTALS
Annual publication:	
• number of occasions they use powers under the Prevention of Social Housing Fraud (Power to Require Information) (England) Regulations 2014, or similar powers	0
• total number (absolute and full time equivalent) of employees undertaking investigations and prosecutions of fraud	0
• total number (absolute and full time equivalent) of professionally accredited counter fraud specialists	0
• total amount spent by the authority on the investigation and prosecution of fraud	Investigation £0 Prosecution £0
• total number of fraud cases investigated	0

Avon Fire Authority does not employ dedicated staff to undertake investigation and prosecution of fraud, but the responsibility is incorporated into a number of roles. Systems of internal control are in place to detect and prevent fraud and these are reviewed by both internal and external audit each year to ensure that they are robust and fit for purpose.

Avon Fire Authority actively participates in the National Fraud Initiative (NFI) process. This process ensures that data is submitted accurately and supports the review of resulting data matches.

The output from the 2016/17 NFI exercise was reported to the Cabinet Office in January 2017. For Avon Fire Authority there were 281 matches split into the following categories:

- 27 matches – Avon Fire Authority payroll to another payroll
- 253 matches – duplicate creditors or duplicate payments
- 1 match – VAT overpaid

The above matches were investigated during 2017/18 the result of which was that no further action was required.