

EAST SUFFOLK BUSINESS PLAN 2015 - 2023



CASE STUDY

FINANCIAL SELF-SUFFICIENCY

PREVENTING FRAUD

Our Business Plan sets out a vision where we work together with other local authorities to reduce costs and deliver more streamlined and resilient services to our communities.

eastsuffolk.gov.uk/east-suffolk-business-plan



 customerservices@eastsuffolk.gov.uk

 01394 383789 (Suffolk Coastal) / 01502 562111 (Waveney)



Beccles Library, Blyburgate, Beccles
Felixstowe Library, Crescent Road, Felixstowe
Marina Centre, Marina, Lowestoft
Woodbridge Library, New Street, Woodbridge

WORKING TOGETHER TO COMBAT FRAUDULENT ACTIVITY



WHAT WE DID?

Working in partnership with Ipswich Borough Council, Suffolk Coastal and Waveney District Councils have successfully prevented more than £4.3 million of public money being lost to fraud in the past year.

Since forming in 2015, a team of five anti-fraud specialists from across the three councils have been undertaking investigations into possible fraudulent activity across the three districts. This includes fraud in relation to Right to Buy applications, Blue Badge schemes, bus pass misuse, housing benefit, council housing sub-letting and council tax fraud.

In addition to preventing £4.3 million in the past twelve months, the team also prevented more than £3.2 million of fraudulent activity in their first twelve months of work.

Last year, 29 fraudulent Right to Buy applications were prevented in Ipswich, saving almost £2 million, with a further 21 Right to Buy applications stopped in Waveney saving another £2 million.

WHY WE DID IT?

By investigating suspicious activity and preventing fraud, the Councils are ensuring public money is used for its proper purpose - to provide essential services.

Fraud can affect all aspects of the community - by actively preventing fraud and encouraging members of the public to report suspicious activity helps increase public confidence in the Councils response to fraud and the importance of reporting it. It also makes it easier to share issues of fraud and help protect the public against scams.

Also, developing a stronger, more collaborative approach with other organisations enables the sharing of resources and links with the Councils' Business Plan aims of financial self-sufficiency.



THE DIFFERENCE THIS MADE?

The Corporate Investigations team are confident that collaborative working and sharing of information and experience has led to an increase in fraud prevention.

The team are working to build stronger defences against fraudsters and are dedicating more resources to combat fraud at its source. Other authorities have expressed an interest in working with the team to further reduce activity in other areas.

Residents are encouraged to report potential fraud via a dedicated fraud hotline (01394 444 444) and email address: fraud@eastsuffolk.gov.uk

This makes it easier for members of the public to report issues in confidence.

"We have a zero tolerance approach to fraud. We are here to provide a public service and provide value for money - we will prosecute if necessary."

- SIOBHAN MARTIN
HEAD OF INTERNAL AUDIT



£4.3 MILLION OF
FRAUDULENT ACTIVITY
PREVENTED