

NATIONAL FRAUD INITIATIVE (NFI) – NATIONAL EXERCISE 2012/13

1. INTRODUCTION

Audit Scotland carries out data matching under 26A of the Public Finance and Accountability (Scotland) Act 2000 which provides that Audit Scotland may carry out data matching exercises, or arrange for them to be carried out on its behalf. The Audit Commission's NFI team carries out the matching work on their behalf.

This report provides the current position regarding the Accounts Commission – Audit Scotland NFI exercise for 2012/13. It details the steps recently taken by internal audit and services in preparation for the NFI referral matching exercise that will commence in January 2012.

2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 The Audit Committee is asked to note the contents of this report which will be followed up by Internal Audit.

3. DETAILS

- 3.1 The Accounts Commission requested that Argyll and Bute Council submit the following datasets by the 8th October 2012;

- Payroll
- Creditors
- Council Tax
- Market Traders
- Personnel alcohol/Taxi Licences
- Blue Badges
- Residential Care Home
- Insurance claims

This information was electronically uploaded onto the NFI secure website by Customer and Support Services on the 8th of October 2012. On the 9th of October the Council received notification that the data uplift had been successful.

- 3.2 Prior to the 8th of October, steps were taken to follow the Fair Processing Guidelines issued by the Accounts Commission regarding notifying employees and the public about the NFI 2012/13 exercise. This notification process involved setting up a webpage on the Council's web site containing relevant information and useful links to the Audit Commission website regarding the NFI exercise. Council employees were notified through a message on their payslips.
- 3.3 The Accounts Commission required all bodies involved in the NFI exercise to inform Sole Traders listed on their Creditors system regarding the forthcoming

NFI exercise. Through joint working within Customer and Support Services a list of Sole Traders was produced and a notification letter prepared. Once this was agreed with Governance and Law and Audit Scotland it was dispatched to listed Sole Traders.

4 CONCLUSION

- 4.1 The success of the last NFI exercise was down to co-operation between services. In particular the allocation of responsibility to officers within services for the follow up of NFI referrals was important along with meeting key Accounts Commission – Audit Scotland dates. Set out below in Tables 1 and 2 are the responsible officers for the forthcoming exercise and key dates announced by the Accounts Commission and Audit Scotland.
- 4.2 The preparation work for the 2012/13 NFI exercise has been completed and the Council is presently compliant with the requirements set out by the Accounts Commission. A report to this effect was recently presented to the Strategic Management Team (SMT) for their notice. The SMT will receive monthly progress reports post January 2013. The Audit Committee will receive quarterly progress reports from March 2013 forward.

APPENDIX 1

Table 1 – Responsible Officers for NFI Exercise 2012/13

Datasets	Responsible Officer	Estimated Completion Date
Council Tax	Revenues Supervisor	28 Feb 2014
Creditors	Creditors Supervisor	28 Feb 2014
Payroll	Payroll Supervisor	28 Feb 2014
Residential Care Homes	Finance Officer	28 Feb 2014
Blue Badges	Customer Management Project Assistant	28 Feb 2014
Market Traders	Administrative Assistant	28 Feb 2014
Alcohol and Taxi Licenses	Administrative Assistant	28 Feb 2014
Insurance	Administration Assistant – Insurance	28 Feb 2014

Table 2 – Key Dates

Key Dates	Target Dates
Participants will submit fair processing compliance returns	Friday 28 September 2012
Participants will extract the data from the systems in accordance with the data specifications	Monday 8 October 2012
Participants will upload the live data to the NFI web application	Monday 8 October 2012
The Audit Commission NFI team will send automatically generated reminders to participants who have not submitted expected datasets	Monday 15 October 2012 onwards
Audit Scotland will provide training for participants	January 2013
The Audit Commission NFI team will make the 2012/13 exercise matches available	Tuesday 29 January 2013
Audit Scotland will use the outcomes as at this date for the national report	Monday 31 March 2014
Audit Scotland will publish the 2014 NFI report	May 2014

For further information contact Ian Nisbet on TEL: 01546 604216. 28 November 2012.