

Précis of the more significant cases

Blue Badge

A temporary member of staff had his contract terminated for fraudulently using his partner's Blue Badge. He was successfully prosecuted at Milton Keynes Magistrates Court where he was fined £110 and ordered to pay costs of £360 and a victim surcharge of £20, all payable within 14 days.

Car Share

An employee was dismissed for submitting a false application for a Car Share Permit which was subsequently granted allowing the employee to defraud the Council over a significant time period. Another employee was also dismissed for car share permit misuse. Both employees are currently being prosecuted.

Work Time Fraud

An employee was dismissed for spending over 50% of his working time on the internet for personal use and other work. The employee was also invoiced for the identified time and £1659 was recovered.

A further employee was dismissed for putting false information on her timesheets allowing her to defraud the Council in respect of her wages.

Sickness Fraud

An employee was alleged to have been working in a supermarket whilst on sickness absence with the Council. The employee resigned.

Taxi Licencing

A review was undertaken into the circumstances surrounding the granting of a taxi licence to an individual who had convictions for serious sexual offences. It was concluded that appropriate information was provided to the Regulatory Sub Committee and that although the decision to grant the licence was within the very wide discretion afforded to councillors a reasonable member of the public would have been unlikely to have come to a decision to grant a taxi licence to an applicant with such convictions. Councillors granting the licence placed significant weight on a serving councillor's oral reference supporting of the applicant. The referee subsequently resigned from both his mayoral and councillor positions. A number of other issues relating to the wider Taxi Licencing arrangements were identified, the majority of which have now been addressed.

Buszy

A review of the Buszy car parking arrangement was undertaken and a series of checks of the car park area were carried out in order to verify whether there were discrepancies between the numbers of cars using the car park and the income being declared. There was insufficient evidence and accounting information for adequate conclusions to be drawn and the Council had no jurisdiction to investigate the matter further.

Theft

An employee was dismissed and successfully prosecuted for theft of Council equipment. The Court stated that the employee should pay £320 compensation, £60 court costs and £85 CPS costs in addition to undertaking 80 hours community work.

Contractor Theft

A contractor was removed for alleged theft of diesel and Council equipment. The CCTV footage and information did not reach the threshold for a criminal prosecution however, the evidence and explanations of the contractor were sufficient for the Council to justify his removal.

Disciplinary Hearing

An employee received a Final Written Warning for misleading a Disciplinary Hearing when he was called to give evidence on behalf of a colleague who was himself being disciplined.

Overstated Contractor Payments

A company operating a large contract for the Council was found to have substantially overcharged the Council for materials used over a number of years. After an investigation there was insufficient evidence to suggest fraud had taken place but the contractors processes and procedures were found to be inadequate. The contractor agreed to repay the Council for the overcharging that had occurred.

Cyclo-cross

On November 29th 2014 the Union Cycliste Internationale (UCI) Cyclo-Cross World Cup (WCX) took place in Milton Keynes at Campbell Park and a round of the British National Series was held at the same venue on the following day. The Council was the organiser and host of this particular event whereas in previous events they have only held a facilitating and supportive role in areas of appropriate expertise (eg Traffic Management). On 20th October 2014 Audit began a background review of the WCX project which was being managed by Transportation Services which revealed potential serious flaws and failings in the management and set up of the WCX. As a result an urgent Project Board was set up on 10th November 2014 and the MK Approach implemented. The event was subsequently successful but at significant unanticipated resource and cost implications as a result of both governance and misconduct issues. All employee investigations have been resolved and an audit report is due to be submitted to Audit Committee in September.