

Lino Messore

From: Sandra Alexander
Sent: 18 September 2008 09:13
Subject: National Fraud Initiative

**SENT ON BEHALF OF CHRIS NAYLOR, CORPORATE DIRECTOR, RESOURCES
(S151 OFFICER)**

Note to Members and all employees

**THIS IS FOR INFORMATION ONLY – YOU ARE NOT REQUIRED TO TAKE ANY
ACTION**

Tower Hamlets is participating in the forthcoming National Fraud Initiative. The Initiative which is managed by the Audit Commission under their powers within Part 2 of the 1998 Audit Commission Act, is a data matching exercise which cross checks key Council data to detect and prevent fraud or loss of public funds.

This means that for 2008/9, we will provide the Audit Commission with data relating to our financial systems including payroll information. For more details, see web-link www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/nfi or contact our NFI Co-ordinator Lino Messore on Ext 4774.

You may also be aware that Tower Hamlets in its role in protecting public funds has developed an anti fraud strategy, which includes a whistle blowing procedure and hotline: 0800 528 0294. Further details are available online at : www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/anti-fraud-strategy

Sandra Alexander,
P.A. to Chris Naylor,
Corporate Director, Resources,

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National fraud initiative 2008/09

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Key documents

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- [Diversity & equalities action plan](#)
- [Equality impact assessment](#)
- [Gateway strategy](#)
- [Gender equality scheme](#)
- [ICT strategy](#)
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This authority is required by law to protect the public funds it administers. It may share information provided to it with other bodies responsible for auditing or administering public funds, in order to prevent and detect fraud.

The Audit Commission appoints the auditor to audit the accounts of this authority. It is also responsible for carrying out data matching exercises.

Data matching involves comparing computer records held by one body against other computer records held by the same or another body to see how far they match. This is usually personal information. Computerised data matching allows fraudulent claims and payments to be identified. Where a match is found it indicates that there is an inconsistency which requires further investigation. No assumption can be made as to whether there is fraud, error or other explanation until an investigation is carried out.

The Audit Commission currently requires us to participate in a data matching exercise to assist in the prevention and detection of fraud. The Audit Commission requires this authority to provide information it holds for this purpose. We are required to provide particular sets of data to the Audit Commission for matching for each exercise, and these are set out in the Audit Commission's guidance, which can be found at www.audit-commission.gov.uk/nfi.

The use of data by the Audit Commission in a data matching exercise is carried out with statutory authority under its powers in Part 2A of the Audit Commission Act 1998. It does not require the consent of the individuals concerned under the Data Protection Act 1998.

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Data matching by the Audit Commission is subject to a Code of Practice. This may be found at www.audit-commission.gov.uk/nfi. For further information on the Audit Commission's legal powers and the reasons why it matches particular information, see

www.auditcommission.gov.uk/nfi/fptext.asp

For further information on data matching at this authority contact our NFI Key Contact - Lino Messori on 0207 364 4774.

Useful links

[Anti-fraud & corruption strategy](#)

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News

Tackling fraud robustly

"The National Fraud Initiative helps us tackle fraud. We have a robust approach to identifying and tackling fraud and will do everything we can to ensure value for money for local people."

LEAD COUNCILLOR FOR RESOURCES JOSHUA PECK

Royal appointment

Bow fine food company Forman & Field catered for the Queen at this year's Ascot Polo tournament.

WWW.FORMANANDFIELD.COM

Sample some fine local food

FINE foods company Forman & Field will host a free open day at its new Bow premises, on October 4, to celebrate the start of British Food fortnight.

The East End company, which recently relocated to Stour Road, Fish Island, supplies food to many of the world's leading restaurants and hotels.

In 2007 it was a regional finalist in UKTV Food's Local Food Hero competition and in 2008 catered for the Queen at the Ascot Polo tournament.

Forman's new purpose-built home, which it moved to after a three-year compulsory purchase negotiation to make way for London 2012, is the closest private building to the future



An employee hangs up fish for smoking at Forman & Field's new premises in Bow

Olympic stadium. Fish-shaped, it features a smokehouse and production kitchen, two restaurants and a large events venue. Open day highlights include

demonstrations and talks with gourmet chefs as well as free tastings of food and drink. Owner Lance Forman said: "My family have been smoking

salmon for four generations. We are proud of what we do and we want people to come along and share our passion. "I am relishing the chance to

show off our amazing new food destination. We are part of London's food heritage and have a real story to tell." The open day starts at noon.

News in brief

Help with your loss

A BEREAVEMENT group for people over the age of 50 has been launched at Sonali Gardens, a centre for older people. The group, co-ordinated by City & East London Bereavement Service, will meet from 6.30-8pm on September 24, at 79 Tarling Street, Stepney.

For further information, call Allyson at LinkAge Plus on 7265 9292 or visit Sonali Gardens.

Rights for workers

WORKERS in building services, retail, health, social care, transport and sports, including cleaners, security canteen workers, and receptionists, can find out about employment rights.

The Vulnerable Workers Project, delivered by the Trade Union Congress (TUC) holds advice sessions at Bow Business Centre, 153-159 Bow Road every Tuesday from 5-7pm.

For details call 7377 0773.

Council helps to

Calling all owners and managers of businesses based in Tower Hamlets

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Council helps to catch fraudsters

BY KELLY RICKARD

TOWER Hamlets Council will again be taking part in the National Fraud Initiative which cross-checks information held by the public sector to identify where people might be committing fraud.

The council will be providing the Audit Commission with information concerning its employees and councillors along with tenancy and Right to Buy sales details, housing benefits, parking permits, blue badges and Freedom passes to support

the initiative. Lead councillor for resources Joshua Peck explained: "The council has a duty to spend council tax payers' money carefully and do our best not to lose money to fraud. "The NFI lets us compare the information we hold about residents - who's claiming benefits for example - with government departments. This enables us to tackle fraud locally and ultimately keep costs and council tax low."

He added: "We're committed to providing the best possible services to local people. Part of that is making sure these ser-

vices reach people who need them and not those who don't."

In 2006/7, the NFI, which is managed by the Audit Commission, helped identify "matches" allowing the council to start to recover more than £430,000. More details on the council's anti-fraud work are available online at www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/anti-fraud-strategy

The whistle-blowing hotline is 0800 528 0294. For more information on the commission's legal powers and why it matches particular information, visit www.auditcommission.gov.uk/nfi/fp/text.asp

Are you missing out on pension credits

OLDER people who are struggling with the spiralling cost of living could be missing out on financial benefits, according to Help the Aged.

The charity estimates 207,000 pensioners in London (20 per

cent) are living in poverty and struggling to afford essentials items, yet tens of thousands are failing to claim benefits to which they are entitled.

The charity is encouraging older people to find out if they

are eligible for pension credit - those who claim before the beginning of October could receive 12 months backdated payments.

For more information, visit www.helptheaged.org.uk or call 7239 1845.

Calling all owners and managers of businesses based in Tower Hamlets

You are invited to take part in Project ARGUS a unique event to see how well you and your staff are prepared for an emergency



This is an opportunity to:

- Decide what your business should do in an emergency situation
- Experience a well-run security exercise
- Increase your knowledge of terrorist issues.
- Compare notes with other local businesses.

The event is for owners/managers of small and medium size businesses and is FREE to attend.

When: **Wednesday 22nd October 2008** | Time: **10am to 1pm**
at a venue within a short walk of Spitalfields/Brick Lane area

No prior preparation/knowledge is required.

Places for the workshop are limited and will be offered on a strictly first come-first served basis.

Book your place now by emailing ht-ctdesk@met.police.uk with your full contact details and writing 'ARGUS event' in the subject box or call the Borough's Met Police on 020 7275 4543.



Health hazard:
Tracy Waller

When separated her property from the site was condemned by fire-fighters who cordoned it off with safety tape.

Now Mrs Waller, who has lived in her Alpha Grove home for nine years, is considering moving out for her own health.

"This is the closest house to any building site on the Isle of Dogs," she said. "It's a pure nightmare. I can't even wash my clothes in the

and my 84-year-old mother lives very close so I don't want to move."

Both Mrs Waller and her children, 13 and 23 respectively, have suffered medical problems in recent months due to allergies.

Mrs Waller has contacted her local councillor, David Snowden, and housing association Toynebee since last weekend.

through to the garden from the living room.

Contractor Ballymore is working on a 20-storey mixed-used building within walking distance of Crossharbour and South Quay DLR stations.

It says the wall crack is related to a tree which was uprooted recently, while checks have been carried out to monitor pollution and noise levels are not excessive.

Network Bangla marks first year

EAST LONDON-based group Network Bangla has celebrated its one-year anniversary after a hectic year of fund-raising and community projects.

The group, formed by Sulhana Begum, Abdul Hasnat, Koyes Ahmed and Fatema Khatun, aims to bring people together to share ideas, resources and learn from one another.

It is also committed to community projects such as Bangla language classes and charity work.

Over the past year the group has raised money for the Bangladesh flood appeal and Cyclone Sidr victims, and is continuing its successful mentoring scheme with Tower Hamlets College.

JOINING FIGHT AGAINST FRAUD

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The council will be providing the Audit Commission with information concerning its employees and councillors along with tenancy and Right to Buy sales details, housing benefits, parking permits, blue badges and freedom passes to support the initiative.

The whistle-blowing hotline is 0800 528 0294.

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APPENDIX 4

<u>No of referrals</u>	<u>Subject</u>	<u>Area</u>	<u>No of Days</u>
34	Whistle Blows including work carried forward from 2007/8	Reactive	43
19	Police enquiries	Other agencies	10
4	DWP enquiries	Other agencies	5
5	External enquires from other Local Authorities or agencies	Other agencies	3
N/A	Best Value Performance Indicators Review and Support to Directorates	BVPI review	20
N/A	Continued work of previous NFI 2006/7	NFI	10
N/A	Preparation, collation and data checking for the Current NFI 2008/9	NFI	25
15	Internal reactive referral work - under 3 days	Reactive	20
12	Internal reactive referral work of 3 -10 days	Reactive	51
			<u>187</u>
N/A	Training	Training and Governance	8
N/A	Management and 1-2-1	Governance	3
N/A	Committees	Governance	8
			<u>19</u>
N/A	Work for THH	THH	58
			<u>264</u>