

### Why does the Council data match?

The Council is required by law to protect public monies. We may share information provided to us with other bodies responsible for auditing or administering public funds. This is in order to prevent and detect fraud.

### What does data matching involve?

Data matching involves comparing computer records held by one organisation against other computer records by the same or in some cases another organisation. This is usually personal information. The Audit Commission has written a Code of Data Matching Practice to help ensure that the Commission and its staff, auditors and all persons and bodies involved in data matching exercises comply with the law, especially the provisions of the Data Protection Act 1998, and to promote good practice in data matching.

Computerised data matching allows potentially fraudulent claims and payments to be identified. Where a match is found it may indicate an inconsistency which needs to be investigated. No assumption is made as to whether there is fraud, error or other explanation until an investigation is carried out.

### Why is Derby City Council required to do this?

Since 1996 the Audit Commission has run the National Fraud Initiative (NFI), an exercise that matches electronic data within and between audited bodies to prevent and detect fraud. This includes police authorities, housing associations, local probation boards and fire and rescue authorities as well as local councils. The use of data for NFI purposes continues to be controlled to ensure compliance with data protection and human rights legislation. The Audit Commission Act 1998 is the legislation which governs participation.

### Example of Type of data matching reports for Creditors

Each different permutation is the subject of a separate report, so for creditors there are reports of:-

- Duplicate creditors by creditor name
- Duplicate creditors by address detail
- Duplicate creditors by bank account number
- Duplicate records by invoice reference, invoice amount and creditor reference
- Duplicate records by invoice amount and creditor reference
- VAT overpaid
- Duplicate records by creditor name, supplier invoice number and invoice amount but different creditor reference
- Duplicate records by supplier invoice number and invoice amount but different creditor reference and name

- Duplicate records by postcode, invoice date and invoice amount but different creditor reference and supplier invoice number
- Duplicate records by postcode, invoice amount but different creditor reference and supplier invoice number and invoice date

#### Types of match identified

For example, the payroll data submitted by Derby City Council is compared with all other payroll data received by the Audit Commission.

Below is an actual example of a payroll match taken from the 2010/11 exercise:-

authority	Payroll ref	Name	NINO	address
Derby	Nnnnnn	Ms S Nxxxxx	YY9837nn	A property in Derby
Authority B	rrrrrr	Mrs M MCMxxxx	YY9837nn	A property in B

For this case, the only match was that the National Insurance number (NINO) was the same in both cases. After checking it was found that there had been an error at Authority B and their employee's details had been entered on their system incorrectly. For these cases it is important the contributions are made under the correct NINO, otherwise when that individual needed to claim Benefits, their contributions may be classed as insufficient. However, there is also the possibility that an incorrect NINO had been quoted deliberately as part of a fraud.

#### Timetable of NFI

Files are created during the autumn and submitted to the Audit Commission using a secure web portal. The resulting matches are reported some months later via the same secure portal. For the main cycle of reports which includes creditors, payroll, housing, housing benefit etc, the reports were released in January. For the alternate year cycle, where Council Tax data is compared with Electoral Roll data, the submission dates are October and December, and the reports are released in March.

During the year, progress in resolving cases is monitored closely by the Audit Commission with regular e-mails being sent to the Head of Governance and Assurance. These e-mails include reports on which staff members have failed to access the portal for specified times, which reports have not been accessed, etc.