

Title of Report:	Correspondence
Committee Report Submitted To:	Audit Committee
Date of Meeting:	16 September 2026
For Decision or For Information	For Information
To be discussed In Committee	No

Linkage to Council Plan (2026-31)

Strategic Theme	Governance, Quality & Continuous Improvement
Outcome	Governance arrangements that ensure compliance, transparency, and effective decision-making
Lead Officer	Director of Corporate Services

Estimated Timescale for Completion

Date to be Completed	
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Budgetary Considerations

Cost of Proposal	N/A
Included in Current Year Estimates	
Capital/Revenue	
Code	
Staffing Costs	

Legal Considerations

Input of Legal Services Required	YES/NO
Legal Opinion Obtained	YES/NO

Screening Requirements	Required for new or revised Policies, Plans, Strategies or Service Delivery Proposals.		
Section 75 Screening	Screening Completed:	Yes/No	Date:
	EQIA Required and Completed:	Yes/No	Date:
Rural Needs Assessment (RNA)	Screening Completed	Yes/No	Date:
	RNA Required and Completed:	Yes/No	Date:
Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA)	Screening Completed:	Yes/No	Date:
	DPIA Required and Completed:	Yes/No	Date:

1.0 Purpose of Report

1.1 The purpose of the report is to present correspondence for Members' consideration.

2.0 Letter from Tomas Wilkinson, Director, NI Audit Office dated 13 August 2026 regarding National Fraud Initiative (NFI) in NI: Data Matching Exercise 2026-27 (attached at Appendix 1)

2.1 Extract

The next NFI exercise will commence later this year with data upload from 30 September 2026 and Causeway Coast and Glens Borough is expected to participate.

The following datasets must be submitted

- Payroll
- Trade Creditors
- Pensions

The Chief Finance Officer will receive more details from the NI Audit Office about this exercise and this will be presented to the Finance Committee.

Recommendation

It is recommended that the Audit Committee notes the correspondence.

13 August 2026

Dear Accounting Officer/ Chief Executive

National Fraud Initiative (NFI) in Northern Ireland: Data Matching Exercise 2026-27

1. As you will be aware, your organisation has participated in previous NFI exercises. The NFI has proved to be a valuable tool in the fight against fraud in Northern Ireland, with total outcomes to date (both actual and estimated) of over £55 million. I would like to take this opportunity to thank your organisation for its important role in this ongoing counter-fraud initiative.
2. The purpose of this letter is to inform you of the next exercise, NFI 2026-27, which will commence later this year with data upload from 30th September 2026. Once again, your organisation will be expected to participate. A full list of participating bodies is at Appendix 1.
3. We will require upload of the same datasets as in previous years. These are listed at Appendix 2.
4. A fee will be charged for participation in NFI 2026-27. Public Sector Fraud Authority (PSFA) have indicated an increase in fees (c.42%) for participants in this new exercise due to increased innovation, development and contractual costs. Invoices will be issued in January/February 2027. The Department of Finance approves the charging of fees in respect of Crown bodies.
5. I will write separately to your Director of Finance with more detail about the 2026-27 exercise. In the meantime, should you have any queries or like more information generally on the exercise, please contact the NFI co-ordinator, Catherine James, on 028 9025 1102, or email nficoordinator@niauditoffice.gov.uk.

Yours sincerely,



Tomas Wilkinson
Director

Appendix 1

Mandatory Participants	
<i>Northern Ireland Departments</i>	<i>Other central government bodies cont.</i>
Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs	Northern Ireland Housing Executive
Department for Communities	Northern Regional College
Department for the Economy	North West Regional College
Department of Education	Probation Board for Northern Ireland
Department of Finance	South Eastern Regional College
Department of Health	Southern Regional College
Department for Infrastructure	South West College
Department of Justice	Sport Northern Ireland
The Executive Office	Stranmillis University College
Public Prosecution Service (non-ministerial)	Strategic Investment Board
<i>Executive Agencies</i>	Tourism NI
Driver and Vehicle Agency	Ulster Supported Employment Ltd
Forensic Science NI	<i>Health Service Bodies</i>
Forest Service	Belfast Health and Social Care Trust
Labour Relations Agency	Business Services Organisation
Legal Services Agency NI	Strategic Planning and Performance Group
NI Courts and Tribunals Service	NI Ambulance Service Trust
NI Environment Agency	NI Social Care Council
Children's Court Guardian Agency for NI	Northern Health and Social Care Trust
NI Medical and Dental Training Agency	Northern Ireland Blood Transfusion Service
NI Statistics and Research Agency	Regulation and Quality Improvement Authority
Public Health Agency	South Eastern Health and Social Care Trust
Youth Justice Agency	Southern Health and Social Care Trust
<i>Other central government bodies</i>	Western Health and Social Care Trust
Agri-food and Biosciences Institute	<i>Local Government Bodies</i>
Arts Council of Northern Ireland	Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough Council
Belfast Metropolitan College	Ards and North Down Borough Council
Commissioner for Children and Young People NI	Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council
Community Relations Council	Belfast City Council
Construction Industry Training Board	Causeway Coast and Glens District Council
Council for Catholic Maintained Schools	Derry City and Strabane District Council
Education Authority	Fermanagh and Omagh District Council
Equality Commission NI	Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council
General Consumer Council	Mid and East Antrim Borough Council
Health and Safety Executive NI	Mid Ulster District Council
Invest Northern Ireland	Newry, Mourne and Down District Council
Libraries NI	Arc 21
Livestock and Meat Commission	<i>Voluntary Participants</i>
National Museums Northern Ireland	Northern Ireland Audit Office
NI Authority for Utility Regulation	Northern Ireland Water
NI Council for the Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment	Translink
NI Local Government Officers' Superannuation Committee	Victims and Survivors Service
Northern Ireland Assembly	
Northern Ireland Civil Service Pensions	
Northern Ireland Fire and Rescue Service	

Datasets for download and matching

Participating Organisation	Datasets to be submitted
Core datasets to be submitted by all bodies	• Payroll • Trade creditors (including standing data and payments history data)
Pensions data to be submitted by all pension paying bodies : ○ NICS Pensions ○ Teachers' Pensions ○ Health Pensions ○ Local government pensions ○ NI Fire and Rescue Pensions ○ Assembly Pensions	• Pensions (including deferred pensions and dependents in receipt of a deceased person's pension)
Additional datasets to be submitted by relevant bodies	
NI Housing Executive	• Housing benefit claimants • Housing tenants • Right to buy • Social housing waiting list
Department of Finance	• Rates • Lone Pensioner Allowance (LPA) • Electoral register
Department for Infrastructure	• Blue badges • Taxi driver licences
Five area health and social care trusts	• Private supported care home residents
Translink	• Concessionary Travel Passes
Department for Communities	• State pension (to facilitate LPA data match)