

New 'fraud squad' will crack down on criminals who steal taxpayer money

- The Chancellor has announced that a new fraud squad, recruited from data analytics experts and leading economic crime investigators, will crack down on criminal gangs who rip off the taxpayer.
- Operational in July and based in the Cabinet Office, the new £25 million "Public Sector Fraud Authority" will double funding for the Government's central counter fraud capacity.
- More details of the new fraud squad will be confirmed at the first meeting of the Chancellor chaired Efficiencies and Value for Money Committee today.

Rishi Sunak will unveil the new Public Sector Fraud Authority, which will be up and running by July, doubling the Government's central counter fraud capacity.

The new body will recruit leading data analytics experts and economic crime investigators to recover money stolen from Covid support schemes and spot suspicious companies and people seeking Government contracts. Counter fraud experts will also mount mandatory inspections on Whitehall programmes to uncover vulnerabilities.

Chancellor of the Exchequer, Rishi Sunak said:

We will chase down fraudsters who rip off the taxpayer. This elite fraud squad, backed by £25 million, will ensure the latest counter fraud techniques are being used to track down these criminals.

People are rightly furious that fraudsters took advantage of our vital Covid support schemes, and we are acting to make sure they pay the price.

Minister for Brexit Opportunities and Government Efficiency, Jacob Rees-Mogg said:

Hardworking taxpayers must and will be protected. Anyone who tries to defraud the public purse will know that we as a government are coming for them and we are going to put them behind bars.

Recruitment for the Chief Executive of the Public Sector Fraud Authority will

start in the coming weeks, with candidates picked from leading counter fraud experts. The new CEO will answer directly to the Chancellor and the Minister for Brexit Opportunities and Government Efficiency.

Mr Sunak will unveil details of the new counter fraud squad when he chairs the first meeting of the government's new Efficiencies and Value for Money Committee later today, set up at the request of the Prime Minister.

At the committee the Chancellor will also launch the Government's Plan for Protecting the Taxpayer to cut waste by slashing the Government's property bill, doubling the NHS efficiencies target, reducing non-front line civil service head count, as well as "quango" budgets and cracking down on fraud and error.

The committee is chaired by the Chancellor and deputy co-chaired by Simon Clarke, Chief Secretary to the Treasury and Jacob Rees-Mogg, Minister for Brexit Opportunities and Government Efficiency.

The full membership of the committee, confirmed today, is Steve Barclay, Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, Oliver Dowden, Minister without Portfolio and Michael Ellis, Paymaster General and Minister for the Cabinet Office.