

**OFFICE OF THE POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER FOR HUMBERSIDE
DECISION RECORD**

Decision Record Number: 16/2023

Title: Funding of the Fraud Watch (Cyber Fraud) Service

Executive Summary:

This paper recommends the extension of the Fraud Watch (Cyber Fraud) Service to provide:

A victim centric reporting process within HP, which will listen to the victims' story and provide immediate advice and support to the victim. Meeting the increasing demands for a tailored service in respect of fraud and cybercrime.

A joined-up approach to raising public awareness of fraud/cyber Fraud to prevent further fraudulent crime.

Decision:

To provide funds of £50,000 from the Victim Grant to maintain the service and align with commissioning process for future integration of the service into the Victims Hub.

Background Report: Open

Police and Crime Commissioner for Humberside

I confirm I have considered whether I have any personal or prejudicial interest in this matter and take the proposed decision in compliance with my code of conduct.

Any such interests are recorded below

This above decision has my approval

Signature



Date: 04/04/2023

POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER FOR HUMBERSIDE

SUBMISSION FOR: DECISION

OPEN

Title: Extending of the funding for the Fraud Watch Service

Date: 27/03/2023

1.0 Introduction

The Fraud Watch (FW) service offers fraud prevention, information for victims of fraud and support for everyone in the Humberside area, amongst other service they offer:

Raising Awareness: FW provide fraud and cyber awareness workshops and webinars that are open to anyone looking to increase their knowledge on the subject. In addition to this, we also provide regular updates through our Facebook and Twitter accounts as well as maintaining regular listings within the ERVAS fortnightly e-Bulletin.

Reporting & Alerts: FW provide support to victims to report an incident, and this support includes directing the victims to the most appropriate reporting channels.

Victim Advocacy: FW provide support to victims to ensure that they are receiving the best possible service from the police and other agencies.

2.0 Background

Since this phase of the project started in April 2023 FW have delivered 75 fraud and cyber awareness events engaging with 1582 individuals.

The individuals taking part in these courses have been both a mix of professionals from a range of sectors including voluntary and community groups, faith groups, the education sector, the public and private sectors as well as the wider public. These events have included a mix of online webinars and face to face training workshops.

FW have attended a number of community events as a stall holder, and some of the most successful events have included the Driffield Show and Howden Show. At these events FW were supported by police volunteers who helped to raise awareness of fraud and signpost victims to the most appropriate reporting methods.

Feedback on the current service

Topic	Excellent	Good	Average	Poor
Knowledge of the subject	70%	28%	2%	0%
Ability to explain concepts	69%	30%	0	1%
Ability to answer questions completely	72%	27%	1%	0

The usefulness of the information	67%	31%	1%	1%
The structure of the training sessions	65%	32%	2%	1%
The pace of the training sessions	60%	37%	2%	1%

	Yes	No
Was this level of training appropriate for your level of experience	92.5%	7.5%

The individuals who commented 'no' on the training being appropriate, feedback to the service that they had already had this level of training and were looking for something more in-depth. This was taken on board by the service.

This data was requested from the FCR. Between November 2022 and February 2023 there have been at least 243 calls made to 101 to report fraud.

Social Media statistics	Number of Posts	Number of times the page is displayed
Fraud watch Facebook	381	14,000
Twitter	328	14,000

Other communications	Email submissions	Contacts
e-Bulletin	54	676

The service has made a really good start at reaching Humberside communities to prevent fraud and support individuals affected by fraud. However, from the results above it is a concern; the reporting of fraud to the police by 101 (243 in a 4 month period) does not reflect the need in the community for this assistance and support.

The OPCC victim surveys have highlighted a lack of confidence in reporting fraud to the police.

The Cyber fraud service work with partners to ensure the most effective support for the victim. Partners include;

- Victim Support (all FW members are trained to be victim support champions)
- Partnership Age UK Lindsey (FW have shared training and awareness resources with them and cross refer victims/beneficiaries to ensure the best possible support)
- East Riding Digital Inclusion Network – ERDIN (FW has been providing online safety and cybercrime advice to the network – to ensure all new projects include awareness of using digital services safely)

- East Riding CSP (Fraud watch are collaborating on a signed [BSL] version of their online seminar – to ensure the messages are accessible to the Hull and East Riding deaf community)
- HP FCR (as part of the implementation of the Cyber Response Volunteer Service, FW have worked with the FCR to improve the service to fraud victims including; identifying any vulnerabilities and requesting the creation of a new call code to track fraud calls)

The Cyber Response Volunteer Service has not yet been fully rolled out, due to delays caused by the HP implementation of Niche, working out processes with the FCR and a DPIA assessment.

This scheme is close to going live. The FW volunteers will receive referrals from the FCR crime team staff to allow a victim to speak to someone who will; understand the impact of this crime on them, support the individual to affectively report the fraud to FRAUDWATCH and the economic/fraud teams in HP and help them to find the help and advice they want. The aim is to improve the customer care for fraud victims.

There will be an opportunity for the PCC to publicise this service (you said we did) and build confidence in the public to report fraud to the police and access the fraud prevention aspects of the service.

2.1 Future Plans:

- **Continued Workshops / Events**

There are 16 additional workshops / online webinars scheduled to be delivered over the year. 13 of these are online webinars and the remainder are pre-planned workshops requested by key community organisations.

- **Third Party Reporting Centres**

A need has been identified to establish third party reporting centres for fraud and cybercrime incidents. Through developing the Cyber Responder Volunteers Service, it has become apparent that other agencies would also be able to use the same process to support their own beneficiaries in reporting incidents. FW would assist in the training, organisation and joining up of these services.

Organisations such as Age UK, the British Red Cross, Neighbourhood Watch groups and local authority teams would be best placed to support fraud victims with reporting.

Victims are more likely to report fraud to someone that they know and trust, and as such, this would be a method that could be used to further encourage reporting.

3.0 Options Considered:

3.1 Extend the FraudWatch funding

This option is recommended. Continuing with the good work the service has already provided in fraud prevention and supporting fraud victims. Allow them to continue to join up fraud support services into an effective partnership of organisations.

The OPCC Victims' Hub would then be able to include this service into their overall service.

Allow the Cyber Response Volunteer Service to improve the reporting of fraud within Humberside Police and with the assistance of the PCC to publicise the service, significantly improving the customer care for fraud victims and increasing the confidence of the public to report fraud and the public awareness of the fraud prevention services.

To provide an effective and victim centric fraud service which is needed in the Humberside area.

3.2 No longer fund the FraudWatch service

The services provided to the public, FCR and partnership organisations would be put in doubt. The PCC would no longer be able to develop this vital service to help combat the impact on victims of the most prolific crime type in the UK, where the need for prevention, awareness and support is increasing.

When the Hub is developed, it will have to develop this type of service. Before this there would be a gap in support, the commissioning of a service to this level will be a time consuming process. Whereas the service currently exists, providing ongoing support for victim and can be utilised by the Hub.

4.0 Financial Implications

Should option 1 be agreed then there are no financial implications other than cost of the additional element of service at £50,000. Funded via Victim Grant (MoJ)

5.0 Legal Implications

There are no legal implications

6.0 Equalities Implications

There are no equalities issues to be considered.

7.0 Consultation

As detailed in section 2.0. Humberside Police and the service provider have consulted on the satisfaction of service with the community who have accessed the service. Feedback has been positive. and gives confidence in existing and future service provision.

8.0 Media information

None. There may be a future opportunity to promote the service and connect comms with service provider/FCR. Opportunities to promote the service at national fraud week, assisting in raising awareness and promoting local provision.

9.0 Background documents

None.

10.0 Publication

Open

PLEASE COMPLETE AND APPEND THE FOLLOWING TABLE TO ALL REPORTS THAT REQUIRE A DECISION FROM THE COMMISSIONER

This matrix provides a simple check list for the things you need to have considered within your report. If there are no implications please state

I have informed and sought advice from HR, Legal, Finance, OPCC officer(s) etc prior to submitting this report for official comments	Yes
Is this report proposing an amendment to the budget?	Yes
Value for money considerations have been accounted for within the report	Yes
The report is approved by the relevant Chief Officer	Yes
I have included any procurement/commercial issues/implications within the report	Yes

I have liaised with Corporate Communications on any communications issues	No –None required
I have completed an Equalities Impact Assessment and the outcomes are included within the report	Yes, detailed within Victims Hub EIA
I have included any equalities, diversity and or human rights implications within the report	Yes – Seeks to support existing Victims Hub specification, Police and Crime Plan.
Any Health and Safety implications are included within the report	Yes – in broad terms on the health and wellbeing impact on service users
I have included information about how this report contributes to the delivery of the Commissioner’s Police and Crime Plan	Yes