

DECISION NOTICE (OPCC)

Subject:

Funding in Support of Economic Crime Awareness Service

Type of decision:

**Commissioner's
decision**

X

**Chief Officer's
decision**

The decision is that:

The Police and Crime Commissioner awards Greater Manchester Police £215 837.00 to support the implementation of the Economic Crime Awareness Service for victims of fraud within the Economic Crime Unit in Greater Manchester Police. This funding will support an enhanced service to victims of fraud and prioritise the 'Protect' agenda in tackling economic crime. A full description of the proposal and costs are outlined in the attached paper. (Part A)

The reasons for the decision are:

Fraud is becoming an increasing concern nationally. The cost of economic crime across the UK is an estimated £52 billion per annum. There has been an increase in reported offences by 20% from 2014 and the National Crime Survey for England and Wales anticipates that there will be a 40% increase in this type of crime over the course of the next year. Organised Crime Groups are becoming increasingly sophisticated in delivering criminal activity and cyber crime is an extremely lucrative business. Research shows that 80% of fraud related crime (particularly cyber enabled) is preventable. It is extremely difficult for Greater Manchester Police to define the true impact that fraud has on victims locally, as perpetrated offences are wide ranging and depend on a multitude of factors. The need for partnership work to protect people from cyber enabled fraud is particularly important, as traditional 'catch and convict' methods are not sufficient to address this issue alone, and with digital technology being an enabler for 64% of all cases reported to Greater Manchester Police.

Greater Manchester is one of the areas with the highest level of emotional harm as a result of fraud related crime as identified by the National Fraud Intelligence Bureau. Reports received by NFIB on victims within Greater Manchester are currently not assessed in depth at a force level, which means that there are potentially vulnerable victims who remain unidentified missing out on vital services.

This pilot introduces specific resources into the Economic Crime Unit to

address this by:

- Assessing and understanding demand in real time to link and understand intelligence flows
- Identifying and assessing vulnerable victims and understanding the volume and requirements to offer an enhanced service
- Working with the newly established Victim Services Hubs to refer and signpost victims who have complex needs to victim services at a borough level.
- Developing an effective allocation and investigation model aligned to the Target Operating Model
- Developing and delivering effective fraud protection interventions at a place based level and developing capacity to achieve this through a network of statutory, NGO and private sector partners
- Scoping and establishing an effective Communication Network/partnerships for fraud prevention
- Communicating identified themes, trends and crime protection messages to the wider public and businesses in a timely and effective manner to support prevention.

There are clear interdependencies of this proposal with the newly established Victim Services Hubs for Greater Manchester. As such it is recommended that the project report into the Victim Services Programme Board to ensure complementary development.

Alternative options considered and rejected:

No alternative options were considered, as this is proof of concept approach. However, maintenance of the status quo in the face of the rising impact of fraud related crime in the community could result in an increase in the number of potentially vulnerable victims and repeat victimisation, as well as reputational risk to the force in terms of responding to risk, harm and threat of fraud effectively.

Financial comments:

The funding will come from OPCC Transformation Fund and there are sufficient funds within this budget.

Legal comments:

Funding will be provided for a one year pilot, which will include an evaluation to inform future approaches for the Economic Crime Unit within Greater Manchester Police and the services provided to victims of fraud. Greater Manchester Police will be accountable for recruitment to the posts to enable the project.

Risk Assessment:

All activities carried out under the umbrella of this work will be in accordance with the relevant safeguarding policies of the agencies involved in the partnership.

By choosing to fund the above project, the needs of some of Greater Manchester's most vulnerable victims will be met. It is essential that the Chief Inspector in the Economic Crime Unit works alongside the Victims Services Implementation Board to ensure that there is alignment to ongoing and future support services and projects. The following considerations should be made in developing the project to run alongside the Victim Services Hubs, and these outcomes should be reported into the Victim Services Programme Board:

- Establishing information sharing and requests for consent procedures
- Modelling potential demand to the victim services hubs
- Working with the Greater Manchester Police Victims Services Coordinators particularly around quality assurance approaches
- Developing aligned content and referrals through the victim services website
- Working with the new victim services provider regarding publicity and campaigns to ensure there are consistent messages to victims
- Links to the Victim Beneficiary Panels to consider victim feedback
- Development of standardised needs assessments along with the model
- Checking interdependencies with workforce development approaches that are being considered

Is safeguarding of children relevant and has this been considered:

N/A

Agreed by **Commissioner**

Signed:

Date:

Contact Officer:

Lauren Birch

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