**CUMBRIA OFFICE OF THE POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER**

##

 **1 April 2019**

**HMICFRS Thematic Report ‘Fraud: Time to Choose’ – An inspection of the police response to fraud**

A thematic report by Her Majesty’s Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) has recently announced that most victims of fraud are not receiving the level of service they deserve.

We welcome the report, ‘Fraud: Time to Choose’ findings and Cumbria Constabulary will be considering these recommendations.

The Police and Crime Commissioner monitors Cumbria Constabulary through the public accountability framework and will hold them to account for the delivery of these recommendations.

Peter McCall comments: “We welcome this thematic report from HMICFR ‘Fraud: Time to Choose’, and I am not surprised by its findings. In particular cyber fraud is increasing at an alarming pace and often in policing we are playing catch-up in the skills required to counter this criminality in this fast pace environment.”

“Here in Cumbria, fraud is already part of my Police and Crime Plan which sets the priorities for the force locally and as a result the force have been able to meet already a number of the recommendations at a local level.”

“So important is fraud and its impact on people, I have funded Get Safe Online to work locally with Community Safety Partnerships to deliver training at a local level for people to find out first-hand how they can help to protect themselves from fraud, especially on-line fraud. Last week I hosted a seminar for businesses to better protect themselves from this type of crime. We all have a responsibility to protect ourselves. By working together we can help reduce opportunities for ourselves to be targeted.”

Temporary Assistant Chief Constable Andrew Slattery, Cumbria Constabulary, said:

“I can confirm that Cumbria Constabulary is aware of the recommendations set out by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) in their latest report.”

“We have already met the majority of the areas for improvement, for all forces, which places the Constabulary in a healthy position.”

“The Constabulary works with numerous regional and national partner agencies in order to effectively investigate and prevent the many forms of fraud.”

“It is important to note that, in Cumbria, we prioritise the vulnerability of victims in fraud cases. Victims, deemed most vulnerable, are visited and provided the latest expert advice to prevent a reoccurrence.”

“In July 2017, we successfully introduced the Banking Protocol which offers a safeguard to potential victims of banking fraud. Since its inception the scheme has resulted in the Constabulary preventing fraud offences to the value of over £179,000.”

“Further to that we have undertaken many significant investigations into large-scale frauds, resulting in criminals being convicted and the proceeds of their crimes stripped from them so they do not benefit after serving their sentences.”

“Despite the continued success, the Constabulary are not complacent and are working to an identified strategy which provides a holistic service to its communities in tackling fraud offences.”

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