

Rt Hon Priti Patel MP
Home Secretary
2 Marsham Street
London
SW1P 4DF

1 September 2021

Dear Home Secretary

Response to HMICFRS – Spotlight report A review of Fraud: Time to Choose

In line with my statutory responsibilities as Police and Crime Commissioner and following consultation with the Chief Constable, I am pleased to provide the following response to the HMICFRS and the Secretary of State for the Home Office in respect of the above Spotlight report “A review of Fraud: Time to Choose”, which was published on 5 August 2021.

The Chief Constable and I note that the report was a follow up to the 2019 report commissioned by the Home Secretary for a thematic inspection of fraud. We naturally share the concerns highlighted that too many victims still receive a poor service and are denied justice and that the investigation and prevention of fraud offences remain under-resourced and are not given enough priority. Also, there are too few fraudsters held to account.

We support all three recommendations in the report, including the need for an effective national tasking and coordination process for fraud.

The following response has been received from Dorset Police:

- We acknowledge the review of the previously inspected Fraud report of which Dorset were an inspected Force. As a Force we recognise the significant impact of fraud on individuals and businesses, especially those victims in Dorset. We know that losses in reported fraud cases where a victim was based in Dorset totalled £18.2m in the 12 months ending 31/03/2020, rising to £23.5m in the 12 months ending 31/03/2021. It is widely considered that underreporting means that this is a conservative figure compared to the likely reality. The wider impact on the health and wellbeing of fraud victims is largely hidden and many cases go unsolved. This and many other factors do not encourage confidence in reporting fraud crime to the police or Action Fraud.
- Dorset Police have adopted Operation Signature as a response to our vulnerable victims of fraud, a model that is considered national best practice. This focuses on the protection of the elderly and vulnerable members of our communities through awareness and prevention and provides an opportunity to safeguard and reduce the likelihood of re-victimisation for the most vulnerable members of our community.

The Office of the Dorset Police & Crime Commissioner

DAVID SIDWICK
Police & Crime Commissioner
E david.sidwick@dorset.pnn.police.uk

Force Headquarters,
Winfrith, Dorchester,
Dorset DT2 8DZ

T 01202 229084
W dorset.pcc.police.uk

- In line with the HMICFRS recommendations we are seeking to improve our identification of offenders, working with our partners to prevent offending and continue our strong communications to prevent people becoming victims of fraud in the first place. We are reviewing our processes to ensure that appropriate victim support is provided, and vulnerability is identified and considered at the first point of contact in line with national guidance.
- We continue to support Action Fraud and welcome any improvements on a national basis to reduce the incidents and prevent fraud's increasing trend.

This response will be published on the OPCC website.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'D. Sidwick', with a stylized flourish at the end.

David Sidwick
Police and Crime Commissioner