



Scrutiny & Accountability Board

Deep Dive

Fraud

Microsoft Teams

5 May 2022

Attendees	
Police and Crime Commissioner Team	
Suzi Graham (SG)	Policy & Research Officer - Scrutiny, Assurance & Equality
Lee Jones (LJ) (CHAIR)	Chief Executive
Hannah Jenkins-Jones (HJJ)	Strategic Lead for Scrutiny, Assurance & Equality
Lisa Morgan (LM)	Policy Officer Equality Diversity & Inclusion
Claire Perrin (CP)	Policy Officer Equality Diversity & Inclusion
Nia Scourfield (NS)	Governance Support Officer - Scrutiny, Assurance & Equality
Jayne Woodward (JW)	Strategic Lead for Quality, Standards and Compliance
South Wales Police	
Deputy Chief Constable Rachel Bacon (RB)	Deputy Chief Constable
Detective Inspector Nick Bellamy (NB)	Detective Inspector – Major Crime
Detective Superintendent Mark Kavanagh (MK)	Detective Superintendent – Organised Crime
Assistant Chief Constable David Thorne (DT)	Assistant Chief Constable
Detective Sergeant Andrew Westlake (AW)	Detective Sergeant – Economic Crime Officer
Carol Woodward (CW)	Assurance and Inspection Manager

.	Agenda Item	Content
1.	Introductions, & Apologies	1.1 LJ welcomed attendees and introductions were made. LJ stated that the findings of the last deep dive were escalated to the Commissioner's Strategic Board as this was considered to be a priority area at present.
2.	Minutes of Previous Meetings	<p>2.1 The minutes of the previous escalations meeting were agreed as a true record. It was agreed that the actions would be discussed outside of the meeting.</p> <p>2.2 LJ agreed that there would be comprehensive focus on aspects of items that came out of the deep dive meeting in relation to recruitment and training, and that these would be revisited outside of the formal meeting process.</p>
3.	Business Assurance Report: Conclusions and Recommendations: Progress of Force Race Equality and Anti-Racism Work	3.1 HJJ referred to the recommendations within her report and asked the board to consider them. The recommendations included refreshing the Joint Race Equality Action plan and ensuring success measures were clear. HJJ also referred to how the force and the Commissioner's team would work jointly to monitor progress on a regular basis, through use of a particular board or working group. RB agreed to the recommendations in the report.
4.	Presentation -Protecting vulnerable victims of Fraud	<p>2.1 DT introduced the item and shared that the National Fraud Intelligence Bureau helped the force to work through various aspects of work in this area including processes on action fraud, vulnerability and how to look after victims of fraud. DT felt that the force had made progress locally as a result of MKs leadership within this area which was considered high risk.</p> <p><u>Overview</u></p> <p>2.2 MK presented the board with an overview of how the force protect vulnerable victims of fraud. MK felt that this would be an opportunity for the force and Commissioner's team to discuss areas of improvement.</p> <p>2.3 MK referred to the Annual Strategic Assessment and the thematic areas subject of MoRiLE and shared that fraud against the vulnerable was ranked 11th and was comparable with County Lines and Serious Youth Violence. He also stated that there were ongoing concerns regarding the psychological harm to victims and the concerning growth of the use of technology within this crime type.</p> <p><u>Data/ Reports</u></p> <p>2.4 NB provided an overview a victim's journey through fraud and access to available services. He stated that Action Fraud was the UK's national reporting centre where all victims should report to although many victims report directly to South Wales Police, who then advise victims on how to make a report. Investigations are then undertaken by the force in which the suspect resides. NB shared that significant work had gone into the Public Service Centre to reduce over-recording and identify vulnerability. He felt there was work to do in terms of partner agencies receiving a report and encouraging victims to report to Action Fraud.</p>

2.5 LJ felt that there was an opportunity for the Commissioner's team to identify potential gaps for funding in victim support services to enable further support for the work of the force in relation to fraud. CP queried how many victims were on the victim list that the force received on a weekly basis from the National Fraud Investigation Bureau. NB said that the force received around 7 a week which were analysed and reviewed. CP referred to recent criticism towards Action Fraud in relation to identifying risk and vulnerability and queried whether the force used a similar matrix. NB said that he would find out and confirm this.

ACTION: NB to identify whether the force and Action Fraud use the same scoring matrix when identifying risk and vulnerability factors for victims.

Scrutiny and Oversight

2.6 NB provided an overview of the South Wales Police performance data in relation to Fraud compared to other forces in Wales and England. NB highlighted the number of reports received, how many were pursued and the outcomes from 2019 to 2021.

2.7 MK shared feedback from the City of London Police following an engagement visit in February 2022, whereby the force had to demonstrate activity in relation to work in this area. Feedback included good progress being made against HMICFRS recommendations, good understanding of force capability, areas for development and use of innovation to understand fraud hotspots. The feedback also highlighted that South Wales Police were the only force that was using the data from the victims list to identify vulnerability and later published this in a bulletin as best practise to encourage other forces to replicate this process.

2.8 Another aspect of the feedback was in relation to how the force had introduced a governance process, to give fraud more scrutiny around performance. MK referred to the Fraud Operations Group that was introduced in September 2021, which was a bi-monthly meeting with the fraud leads appointed at Detective Chief Inspector level from across the force. The group scrutinise outstanding investigations, evaluate performance and consider lessons learnt. MK shared that officers were aware that they can have 1-2-1 advice and support from members of the group in relation to how to deal with fraud and that a "fraud clinic" idea was also being explored. JW queried whether there were any plans to include training on fraud across the force and suggested a virtual "clinic" for officers. NB confirmed he had been in touch with the Learning Development department about reviewing the curriculum in order to ensure that sessions on fraud were included in training and the role of Action Fraud and has confirmed that this was a priority of his. JW also queried whether there was a case for specialist recruitment in to the force in this area.

2.9 MK provided an overview of resources for the portfolio area, through merging the economic crime unit and cybercrime unit which became the Economic and Cyber Crime Unit (ECCU). MK shared that staff and officers were placed throughout the force area, in order to better understand fraud trends and geographical representation across South Wales. NB highlighted several functions of the Economic and Cyber Crime Unit which included reviews of information and intelligence from the banking industry, coordination of crime prevention activity and provision of advice and support to victims of fraud.

2.10 NB shared an overview of the Economic and Cyber Crime Unit's dashboard for the last three months which summarised recent activity including the amount of financial harm prevented, the number of people who received cyber protect advice and engagement events within schools and organisations. CP referred to the police foundation data and how South Wales Police compared to other forces and queried whether any work had been done in relation to victims who were provided with support but then chose to disengage. NB felt that there was work that was needed be done to ensure a coordinated network and approach throughout the whole of the UK so that victims were receiving the right support. AW shared that victims were always given crime prevention advice no matter of the outcome. HJJ queried if the force collected information on the demographics of the high- risk victims and if there were any protected characteristics in particular, who were more vulnerable in this area. NB shared that this depended on the data from the centre, although there was disproportionality in the data for persons from an ethnic minority background. LJ felt that there was an opportunity to look at the demographics of the victims through possible equality impact assessments.

Victims

2.11 AW provided an overview of how the force support victims through fraud prevention advice, reviewing NICHE records and liaising with banks and financial Ombudsman. AW also highlighted that victims were supported through partner agencies such as Trading Standards, Age Cymru Hope project, Victim Support, and the National Economic Crime Victim Care Unit. AW highlighted how the force received financial intelligence through suspicious activity report referrals from banks. He shared that key word searches were used to identify financial exploitation risks, as the force received over 800 referrals a week. LJ queried whether guidance to banking staff was clear and whether the process could be improved due to a significant number of referrals. AW shared that this was part of the government review of suspicious activity and many other agencies, not just banks were a part of this, that were creating a burden on law enforcement agencies. AW shared that the force used a three-tier scoring matrix to analyse suspicious activity referrals in relation to financial harm to victims.

2.12 AW shared a case study with the board, which was being used for outreach work across the force area for officers and staff to highlight awareness and impact of financial fraud. JW queried how the force planned to communicate and educate the correct messages to the public and partners. NB felt that there was a need to develop a synchronised communication strategy which was an area of business he planned to focus on as strategic lead.

		<p><u>Media/Communications</u></p> <p>2.13 MK highlighted some of the messaging and information that has been shared with the public through various social media channels such as Twitter. MK felt that the interaction from the public with tweets for example was limited and this was being worked on with Corporate Communications to get tactical advice on how to improve.</p> <p>2.14 MK shared that as part of the role of the neighbourhood policing team, PCSO's would be cyber and fraud business leads and would receive a level of training on fraud and the importance of crime prevention. MK felt that PCSO's were a key element in providing and pushing out the right messages and crime prevention advice to members of their communities.</p> <p>2.15 AW provided an overview of fraud hotspots and how these were identified through looking at patterns within intelligence and recorded crime data and felt that the PCSO's would be invaluable in being able to target the most vulnerable in their areas and evaluating the most appropriate intervention, especially if someone was not on social media.</p> <p>2.16 MK shared that part of the discussions with the City of London Police was in relation to the force's ability to map organised crime groups, who's primary method of offending was fraud. MK stated that of the 52 mapped groups in the force, none were engaged directly in fraud, although the force was actively looking for fraud as a secondary threat from these groups.</p> <p>2.17 NB provided an overview of the role of the financial investigation and assets recovery team and the work they had undertaken in relation to cash seizure processes and preparation of confiscation cases for court. He shared that in the last 12 months, criminals have paid back over 3 million pounds into the treasury because of the orders the team have obtained on them.</p> <p>2.18 MK concluded his presentation by highlighting some of the key priorities for continuous improvement within the area for the next 12 months. These included investment in fraud investigation capacity and capability to increase judicial outcomes, enhanced online presence to achieve wider audience reach and filling the intelligence gap and understanding of offenders.</p>
6.	Conclusions & Escalations	<p>6.1 LJ summarised the board's discussions and how the Commissioner's team could work with the force in relation to vulnerability, supporting victims and safeguarding issues in relation to fraud.</p> <p>6.2 HJJ provided concluding comments and thanked the officers for their comprehensive and detailed presentation and their openness during the discussions. HJJ felt that the Commissioner's team had a role to play in communicating and</p>

		<p>educating the public on this area and discussed how the Commissioner’s team could work jointly with the force to consider how to get those messages out to partners. She also shared that the main issues coming through from Victim Focus, were the difficulties people had on how to report fraud. NB shared that there was a report from the national representative of police crime commissioners on fraud that HJJ might find helpful and agreed to share this with her.</p> <p>ACTION: NB to share the report from the National Representative of Police and Crime Commissioners on fraud.</p> <p>6.3 CW confirmed that the force continued to monitor the recommendations made by the HMICFRS in relation to this area of business.</p> <p>6.4 LJ confirmed that the findings and any recommendations from the deep dive would be shared with the board at the next meeting and minutes would be shared in advance.</p>
7.	Another Other Business	7.1 There was no other business.

Action Table

Number	Action	Owner
1.	<i>NB to identify whether the force and Action Fraud use the same scoring matrix when identifying risk and vulnerability factors for victims.</i>	Nick Bellamy
2.	<i>NB to share the report from the National Representative of Police and Crime Commissioners on fraud.</i>	Nick Bellamy