



RURAL, BUSINESS AND CYBER CRIME ACTIVITY UPDATE

1. PURPOSE

1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide members of the panel with an update on the work being undertaken in support of the Police and Crime Plan objective to develop and implement a business crime strategy.

2. BACKGROUND

2.1 The Police and Crime Plan for West Mercia sets out the Police and Crime Commissioners (PCC) objective to address business crime. As previously reported to the panel this objective has since been split into two areas of focus - business crime and rural crime and a separate strategy has been developed for each crime type. Both strategies are alliance wide documents, spanning both West Mercia and Warwickshire Police force areas.

2.2 Since the implementation of the Police and Crime Plan, cyber crime has risen in prominence as a strategic threat at a local, regional, national and international level. Although there is an obligation within the Strategic Policing Requirement to support activity which counters the national threat towards cyber incidents, activity to address the force wide threat has become more of a focus.

2.3 The PCC along with his counterpart from Warwickshire have set aside an annual budget of £1.5 million across both force areas to support and facilitate targeted activity to address rural, business and cyber crime. Funding of any supporting projects will be determined by the geographical area it covers. Any project spanning across the alliance will be funded in line with the cost sharing model with 69% of the costs falling to West Mercia and 31% to Warwickshire. A bid that is wholly contained within either Warwickshire or West Mercia will be funded in full by the corresponding PCC.

3. RURAL AND BUSINESS CRIME

3.1 The business and rural crime strategies as developed set out high level strategic aim and objectives. To implement the strategies at a local level, the PCC approached each of the five Community Safety Partnerships (CSPs) within West Mercia. The CSPs were asked if they would consider reflecting business and rural crime within their own priorities and whether they would lead on working with the local policing superintendent in their area to develop a rural and business crime action plan. All five CSPs agreed to this and costed action plans were developed. Warwickshire identified and developed project proposals in a different way.

3.2 A Rural and Business Crime Governance Board has been established to provide governance for and oversee delivery of the Rural and Business Crime Strategies. The Board covers the alliance area and is comprises both PCCs, police personnel, CSP

representatives and representatives from the business and rural communities including the Federation of Small Businesses, Chambers of Commerce and the National Farmers Union. The first Board meeting took place at the end of October 2014.

3.3 One of the functions of the Board is to review and make recommendations regarding funding of activities supporting delivery of the strategies to enable the two PCCs to release funds for activities. The Board received details of all the action plan proposals referred to in 3.1 and recommended to the PCCs that further information be sought prior to making a funding decision. Further work on funding proposals has since taken place. As a consequence the PCC for West Mercia has very recently determined the projects he will release funds for, as has Warwickshire's PCC.

3.4 Going forward it is hoped that the Board will provide assistance and support in promoting and developing activity around the two strategies which will raise awareness in the wider business and rural communities and see future initiatives supported.

3.5 The PCC and his Deputy have continued to meet with business and farming representatives across West Mercia. In addition, a National Rural Crime Network has been established which brings together PCCs with a common interest in rural crime, to share best practise, develop areas of joint working and to try and influence policy at a national level.

4. CYBER CRIME

4.1 Whilst recognising that there is synergy between certain aspects of cyber crime and elements of business crime cyber crime, at present work around cyber crime is being developed separately from rural and business crime.

4.2 A cyber crime strategic governance group has recently been established. This group brings together a range of business and cyber experts as well as CSP and police representatives whose purpose is to provide strategic direction for both forces and particularly for task and finish groups which are being established as part of the programme. The Deputy PCC for both West Mercia and Warwickshire are members of the governance group.

4.3 The governance group has an agreed delivery plan based on the '4 Ps' of pursue, prevent, prepare and protect, and intends to commission elements of work through the task and finish groups. As national work is concentrated on Pursue, the focus for the groups is on prevent, prepare and protect. At present there is one established group in Warwickshire which has been operating for some time. The police silver lead for cyber recently attended the West Mercia Community Safety Liaison Group meeting in November 2014 and discussions are now under way to develop a mirror group in West Mercia.

4.4 There is an existing cyber crime communications plan in place and an active programme of events and media coverage has been undertaken to raise greater awareness. Examples of this include a cyber crime information security conference held at Coventry University in May 2014 and a further event at Worcester University in September 2014. On the 2nd December 2014 a Cloud Security and Privacy Conference was hosted at West Mercia Police HQ. This event was aimed at businesses, local

government, education authorities and blue light services to provide a wider understanding of cloud security risks. Examples of media campaigns include the '#Be Cyber Smart' which is to raise awareness of internet related crime.

5.CONCLUSION

5.1 Focused work and activity is now underway in all three areas in support of the Police and Crime Plan for West Mercia and will be further strengthened and developed over the coming months.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

Members of the Panel are invited to consider the report.