



## MEDIA INFORMATION

19<sup>th</sup> May 2021

**Embargoed till 0001hrs on Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> May 2021**

### **New Humber wide 'Say No To Fraud' Campaign**

A campaign to raise the awareness of Fraud, how to spot the signs and avoid becoming a victim, has been launched today (Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> May) by the Police and Crime Commissioner for Humberside.

Nationally, fraud cost £2.3 million with 822,276 victims, while in the Humberside Police area 7471 victims lost £13.8 million in 2019/20.

The impact on a victim of fraud can be considerable and have a huge impact on their confidence and wellbeing as well as their financial situation. The new campaign, Say No To Fraud, developed by the PCC's Community Engagement Team, features the real stories of local victims of fraud and aims to reduce the number of victims by committing to increase knowledge of the types of fraud, the methods used by the criminals and advice on how to protect yourself and those you love from becoming a victim of these crimes.

The ultimate mission is that nobody becomes the victim of fraud due to lack of awareness.

Since 2019, the Engagement Team have been hosting local Fraud Forum meetings in partnership with Humberside Police and other agencies, which has been hailed as best practice at recent National Fraud Forums. The purpose of the forums has been to raise awareness about the crime of fraud and try to identify emerging issues of the crime developing in our local area.

Recognising that the people of Humberside are fundamentally polite and friendly people, the team wanted to 'give permission' to our local residents to 'Say NO to Fraud'. That might mean closing the door on a person while you check their credentials, putting the phone down mid-conversation to ring your bank yourself, saying NO to anyone asking for money or bank details that you may have befriended online. It may seem rude at first, but these are serious organised criminals who will be pretending to be someone or something they are not, they are 'wolf in sheep's clothing' at your door, on the phone or online and it won't matter if you offend them. Genuine agencies will always understand and appreciate your caution.

Based on the national Take 5 to Stop Fraud campaign, the Engagement Team have been developing a set of resources that are specific to our area. Taking the top 5 fraud crimes reported

in Humberside and developing resources which are targeted at the members of our community most likely to become victims of each type of fraud using the same methods the criminals use to target them, but to raise awareness instead.

We are also asking our communities to take 5 minutes to talk about fraud with people you care about. Some victims of fraud are embarrassed and might find it embarrassing to tell anyone, because they feel they have been duped, victims often blame themselves for being scammed. As a result of this we have committed to remove the word 'Scam' from our vocabulary in respect of this and future fraud campaigns. Whilst our office staff became Scambassadors through Friends Against Scams training run by national Trading Standards, we began to recognise that there is an element of victim-blaming and minimising the crime when using the word Scam. We opted to talk about Fraud as the serious crime it actually is. It is never the victims fault, they have had their money stolen by unscrupulous criminals who will target them again and again using different methods.

Police and Crime Commissioner Jonathan Evison said, "Sadly the number of people being targeted by fraudsters across Humberside and nationally is huge, however too often people say they've been scammed which belittles fraud. It is a serious crime committed by unscrupulous criminals, therefore vital to ensure that as many of people as possible are fraud aware and are empowered to say no to fraud. My hope is that this campaign prevents people being defrauded of money, having their identities stolen or being left distraught by their ordeals.

"My Office's campaign has given victims of crime a voice to highlight how serious fraud is and also to try and remove the stigma and embarrassment that victims often feel. I urge everyone to take time to learn more about spotting the signs of fraud and discuss the dangers with loved ones. We need to stop feeling embarrassed about becoming victims and take back our right to say no to fraud! Close the door, press delete or hang up on these criminals."

More information can be found on social media #SayNoToFraud and online at [www.saynotofraud.uk](http://www.saynotofraud.uk)

-Ends-

#### **Notes:**

- For more information or to arrange an interview with Jonathan Evison contact Matthew Wright on [matthew.wright.8362@humberside.pnn.police.uk](mailto:matthew.wright.8362@humberside.pnn.police.uk) or 07464 985369.
- Detective Sergeant Ben Robinson from the Humberside Economic Crime Team may also be available for interview via the Humberside Police Corporate Communications Team.