

27<sup>th</sup> September 2016

**Agenda Item: 9**

## **REPORT OF THE SERVICE DIRECTOR SOUTH NOTTINGHAMSHIRE AND PUBLIC PROTECTION.**

### **BETTER CARE FUND – MASS MARKETING SCAMS PREVENTION WORK**

#### **Purpose of the Report**

1. To agree the establishment of two temporary posts for a 12 month period to provide additional officer resource within the Trading Standards & Community Safety Service for mass marketing scams prevention work.

#### **Information and Advice**

##### **Better Care Fund (BCF)**

2. The Better Care Fund (BCF) is a means by which NHS organisations and local authorities work together and invest in a range of health and social care services which support people to remain living independently. The focus of the BCF is to reduce avoidable hospital admissions, provide responsive services which enable people to return home from hospital in a timely way and which support people to remain at home with the right care and support. The BCF aims to respond to service user and carer feedback, thereby improving the quality and effectiveness of services.
3. At the start of 2015/16, central government allocated, via the BCF, an element of funding specifically for the implementation of the Care Act, 2014. Nottinghamshire's allocation of the BCF Care Act funding was £1.983m. In 2015/16 for a number of reasons, primarily the postponement of Part 2 of the Care Act, there was underspend and as a result it was agreed to carry forward £1.6m to 2016/17 for short term funding initiatives.
4. A robust process was put in place to identify the initiatives to be funded. A business case was submitted to request additional resource (£76,786) to support Trading Standards mass marketing scams prevention work, which was approved at the BCF Board in July 16. Progress reports of the project's performance and monitoring against agreed objectives will be required to be given to the BCF Board, ASCH Committee and the Health and Well-Being Board. There will also be progress updates provided to the Community Safety Committee.

## **Mass Marketing Scams Work**

5. Nationally mass marketing scams cause around £3.5 billion of detriment annually to consumers. Vulnerable and disadvantaged residents are deliberately and repeatedly targeted causing significant harm to their health, well-being and independence and often escalating their need for social and health care. The financial detriment involved is often great, with to date at least three Nottinghamshire victims having lost over £150,000 respectively to scams. Many others contacted by Trading Standards Officers have lost tens of thousands to scams.
6. As previously reported to the Committee the Service regularly receives lists of potential scams victims from the National Scams Hub that have been seized from mailing houses. To date we have conducted over 400 visits and have over 400 potential victims still awaiting a proactive visit with further lists expected over the coming months.
7. In September 2014 the National Scams Hub launched a joint initiative with Royal Mail to tackle scam mail in the postal system. The joint initiative created a new improved process for cancelling the contracts of companies that send fraudulent mail. Alongside this, Trading Standards officers are holding dedicated training sessions at Royal Mail delivery offices across the UK to improve awareness of scam mail among postmen and women so that they can report suspect companies and identify potential victims. Over the coming months the Service needs to deliver training to the 30 delivery offices in the County.
8. Visits are also identifying significant social care and health issues impacting on the scam victim's wellbeing and independence. Many of the individuals are not known to social services. Subsequent joint visits with social workers are working effectively as an early intervention to prevent further loss of life savings and to prevent escalating social and health care needs.
9. The joint working with social care and voluntary sector workers is raising awareness of scams and increasing scam referrals to the Service via the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) as a result. Officers are prioritising these referrals which impacts on the capacity to conduct the proactive visits to potential victims on the scams lists.
10. Currently one Trading Standards Officer dedicates 90% of her time to scams and safeguarding work. She is assisted by a Police Community Support Officer (PCSO) seconded for 6 months from March to September 16, funded by Community Safety initiatives funding.

## **Proposal**

11. It is proposed to create two temporary roles within the Trading Standards & Community Safety Service for a 12 month period to provide additional officer capacity needed to support the scams prevention work outlined above.
12. The Better Care Fund (BCF) funding covers the temporary agency salary costs for the 12 month period and associated supplies and services costs. The temporary agency officers would either work on the scams work or be deployed on other Trading Standards

investigative work to release Trading Standards Officer capacity to work on scams prevention.

## **Other Options Considered**

13. The BCF funding proposal has been ratified and agreed via a robust business cases and scrutiny from ASCH senior leadership team. It has been confirmed as delivering the national conditions for the Care Act responsibilities as well as delivering on savings and efficiencies in the short to longer term.

## **Reason/s for Recommendation/s**

14. Scam prevention interventions aim to break the cycle of scam victimisation to alleviate negative health effects on the individuals and to promote well-being and independence. The proposal provides the additional officer capacity needed to intervene to protect hundreds of identified potential scam victims in Nottinghamshire.

## **Statutory and Policy Implications**

15. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of crime and disorder, finance, human resources, human rights, the NHS Constitution (Public Health only), the public sector equality duty, safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults, service users, sustainability and the environment and ways of working and where such implications are material they are described below. Appropriate consultation has been undertaken and advice sought on these issues as required.

## **Financial Implications**

16. The costs of the two temporary posts will be met from the carry forward of the Better Care Funding allocation from 2015/16 of **£76,786** for the project.

## **Business Support/Ways of Working Implications**

17. The posts will be based at the Trading Standards office in Mansfield. There is sufficient flexible working accommodation at that office to accommodate the two additional officers. Business support will be provided by the business support officers at that office.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 1) It is recommended that the Community Safety Committee agrees the establishment of two temporary posts within the Trading Standards & Community Safety Service for a period of 12 months to provide additional capacity needed to undertake scams prevention work.

**PAUL MCKAY**

**Service Director, South Nottinghamshire & Public Protection**

**For any enquiries about this report please contact: Sarah Houlton, Team Manager  
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### **Constitutional Comments (LM 11/08/16)**

The recommendations in the report fall within the Terms of Reference of the Community Safety Committee.

### **Financial Comments (KS 12/08/16)**

The financial implications are contained within paragraph 16 of this report.

### **Human Resources Comments (JD 5/8/16)**

As the intention is to cover the temporary posts through agency temps, any entitlement to redundancy payments or redeployment would not be incurred.

### **Background Papers and Published Documents**

None

### **Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected**

All

