

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: Thursday 21 July 2016

Public-education campaign essential to tackling fraud

Commenting on the Crime outcomes in England and Wales for year ending Mar 2016 published today, Fraud Advisory Panel chair David Kirk, said:

“Official support for fraud victims is poor and the local police response to the growing fraud threat remains inadequate. Little is done to educate the public and help people understand the dangers of fraud or what they can do to protect themselves. This simply is not good enough.”

“Victims of fraud need to know how and where to report fraud, yet for many victims outside of London the outlook is bleak. Local police forces must be held to account and a national public education campaign is now long overdue. It must be well-funded, sustained and smart, to press home these important messages – just like seatbelt and drink-drive campaigns. The benefits will far outweigh the costs and this should be given the highest priority by the government.”

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Notes for editors:

1. In December 2015 **Her Majesty’s Inspectorate of Constabulary** found widespread evidence of poor police understanding and practice with regard to fraud victims, with many forces believing that the creation of Action Fraud had removed their responsibility to tackle fraud at all. The full report (*Real lives, real crimes - A study of digital crime and policing*) can be found here: <https://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmic/our-work/digital-crime-and-policing/real-lives-real-crimes-a-study-of-digital-crime-and-policing/>
2. The **Fraud Advisory Panel** is the respected, influential and independent voice of the fraud-fighting community. It seeks to make a tangible, practical difference in the fight against fraud and financial crime by championing anti-fraud best practice and helping people and organisations to increase their fraud resilience and risk awareness. The Panel is a registered charity. It was established in 1998 by the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales (ICAEW) which continues to provide valuable support.

3. On 5 July the Fraud Advisory Panel published a report, ***The Fraud Review: Ten Years On***, which found that the UK's response to fraud is under-resourced and uncoordinated with a widespread lack of awareness about the threats. The Fraud Advisory Panel has called for a public education campaign, an improved local law enforcement response as well as a new body with strategic oversight for fraud, a government-led fraud indicator and an overhaul of the disclosure regime. The report can be found here: <https://www.fraudadvisorypanel.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/The-Fraud-Review-Ten-Years-On-WEB.pdf>