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**ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL**

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<b>COMMITTEE</b>	Communities, Housing & Public Protection
<b>DATE</b>	17 January 2023
<b>EXEMPT</b>	No
<b>CONFIDENTIAL</b>	No
<b>REPORT TITLE</b>	Update on Cyber Enabled Fraud
<b>REPORT NUMBER</b>	POL/23/026
<b>DIRECTOR</b>	
<b>CHIEF OFFICER</b>	
<b>REPORT AUTHOR</b>	Detective Chief Inspector Karen Main, North East Division, Police Scotland
<b>TERMS OF REFERENCE</b>	2.20

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**1. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 To update members regarding the progress made by the North East Division Cyber Enabled Crime Team (DCECT), previously referenced in Thematic Report POL/21/143, submitted in May 2021.

**2. RECOMMENDATION(S)**

That the Committee:-

- 2.1 Discuss, comment on, and endorse the report.

**3. CURRENT SITUATION**

- 3.1 Technology has changed the nature of offending and the nature of the investigations we carry out. The use of the internet to commit crime, particularly to target vulnerable individuals, as well as responding to local/regional crime, sophisticated international offending perpetrated by organised crime groups is also evident, which presents challenges to law enforcement across the world.
- 3.2 It remains unclear to what extent the pandemic has influenced the drive towards more online reliance, however, INTERPOL have recently reported a significant increase in cyber-enabled crime as organisations and businesses rapidly deployed remote systems and networks to support staff working from home.
- 3.3 As referenced in the previous Report, North East Division implemented a Divisional Cyber Enabled Crime Team (DCECT) in June 2021. This team was the first of its kind in Scotland and was instigated to combat cyber-enabled crime and non-contact Fraud across the North East of Scotland.

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- 3.4 Given its unique nature, DCECT was implemented with a 'Build, Test, Learn and Develop' strategy loop in mind, and an initial review period set for 12 months from inception. This was with a view to critically analysing and assessing function, performance, resource, structure and governance.
- 3.5 The review examined data from 2016/17 to May 2022/23 and noted exponential growth (approx. 800%) in cyber-enabled crime over the last six years. It is assessed the growth rate of this crime type is likely to continue in the short to medium term.

### Resource

- 3.6 The DCECT resource consists of a Detective Sergeant along with 6 permanent officers and 2 seconded officers from frontline policing teams. The seconded officers are deployed on a rolling 6 month basis.
- 3.7 The team is managed by an experienced Detective Inspector as part of their portfolio of responsibilities.

### 4P Strategy

- 3.8 The strategy introduced to support the introduction of DCECT is based on the '4P Principles' of Prevent, Prepare, Protect and Pursue. The adoption of these principles has galvanised activity across the North East and evidence has been provided of progress against each strand. This includes:

#### Prevent

- 3.9 DCECT have developed strong relationships with internal and external partners, with frequent engagement ensuring a cohesive approach in the delivery of the 'Prevent' agenda to date. Successes resulting from this collaboration include the introduction of 'Crime Trend Updates' - targeted messaging highlighting the emergence of non-contact crime trends amongst specified victim demographics. To coincide with Cyber Scotland Week 2022, DCECT collaborated with partners from national Cybercrime, private industry and academia engaged with local and small and medium sized businesses with a view to raising prevention awareness.
- 3.10 During March 2022, DCECT collaborated with local media outlets to deliver a series of informative articles focussed on preventing cyber-enabled crime across a range of formats. Analytical information revealed approximately 11,000 individuals accessed the online series, which is substantially above average levels of engagement. Local media have approached DCECT to run a similar series at a later date based on its success.
- 3.11 In conjunction with Trading Standards Scotland, DCECT supported the delivery of a 'Fraud Roadshow' with a number of engagements to proactively deliver fraud prevention advice in our communities.

**Prepare**

- 3.12 The DCECT delivered awareness sessions to inform and upskill frontline Police staff. These inputs concerned the function and role of the DCECT and available support, along with cybercrime investigative methodology and Q&A's.

**Protect**

- 3.13 The DCECT participated in the revised Grampian Adult Protection Adults at Risk of Financial Harm Sub-Group, alongside statutory and third-sector partners. While the remit of the group continues to evolve, achievements to date include the delivery of a Social Media based question and answer session focussing on Fraud and an agreement between the DCECT and Trading Standards to work in collaboration and deliver Scottish Government funded call screening technology to vulnerable victims of crime.

**Pursue**

- 3.14 DCECT have adapted existing processes and adopted new investigative practices to enhance a comprehensive range of conventional and specialist techniques, legal frameworks and partner relationships to achieve positive outcomes.
- 3.15 During October 2022, DCECT were involved in extensive enquiries, including being the UK's first law enforcement agency to execute a Banking Warrant at 'Binance', to evidence movement of Cryptocurrency.

**Review**

- 3.16 The review found clear evidence that the DCECT have been considerably more effective in supporting, progressing and positively concluding enquiries than previous arrangements.

**Conclusion**

- 3.17 Cybercrime poses a real and substantial threat to the communities and businesses of Scotland, therefore it is critical that we adapt our policing to better respond. There is a need for policing to look beyond conventional approaches to tackle cyber-enabled crime given the assessment that cyber-enabled crime will become increasingly prominent and complex. The DCECT is an early example of providing an enhanced functionality in this specialised area of policing.

**4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from the recommendations of this report.

**5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

5.1 There are no direct legal implications arising from the recommendations of this report.

**6. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS**

6.1 There are no direct environmental implications arising from the recommendations of this report.

**7. RISK**

Category	Risks	Primary Controls/Control Actions to achieve Target Risk Level	*Target Risk Level (L, M or H)  *taking into account controls/control actions	*Does Target Risk Level Match Appetite Set?
<b>Strategic Risk</b>	No significant risks			
<b>Compliance</b>	No significant risks			
<b>Operational</b>	No significant risks			
<b>Financial</b>	No significant risks			
<b>Reputational</b>	No significant risks			
<b>Environment / Climate</b>	No significant risks			

**8. OUTCOMES**

<u><a href="#">Aberdeen City Local Outcome Improvement Plan</a></u>	
Prosperous People Stretch Outcomes	Police Scotland are key partners within Community Planning Aberdeen and help contribute to the shared vision for 2026 that ' <i>Aberdeen is a place where all people can prosper</i> ' and towards the achievement of the LOIP theme which aims to make people more resilient and protect them from harm; where every

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	child, irrespective of their circumstances, is supported to grow, develop and reach their full potential; and where all people in Aberdeen are entitled to live within our community in a manner in which they feel safe and protected from harm, supported when necessary and fully included in the life of the city.
Prosperous Place Stretch Outcomes	Police Scotland are key partners within Community Planning Aberdeen and help contribute to the shared vision for 2026 that ' <i>Aberdeen is a place where all people can prosper</i> ' and towards the achievement of the LOIP theme which aims to support individuals and communities to live in healthy, sustainable ways.

**9. IMPACT ASSESSMENTS**

<b>Assessment</b>	<b>Outcome</b>
<b>Integrated Impact Assessment</b>	Not required
<b>Data Protection Impact Assessment</b>	Not required
<b>Other</b>	None

**10. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

10.1 Not applicable

**11. APPENDICES**

11.1 Not applicable

**12. REPORT AUTHOR CONTACT DETAILS**

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