

Rt Hon Priti Patel MP  
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Your Ref: n/a  
Our Ref 20210929 SH  
Date: 29 September 2021  
Enquiries to: Suzanne Harris  
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Dear Home Secretary,

I write in response to the HMICFRS report: 'A review of 'Fraud: Time to choose''.

I acknowledge the recommendations made in this report and understand that recommendations 1 and 3 (listed in appendix A for reference) are applicable to all Forces, including Essex Police.

I note that not all recommendations from the 2019 report on this topic (Fraud: Time to choose - An inspection of the police response to fraud) have been implemented. In this initial report there were two recommendations relevant to Essex Police and at a national level, one of these has been completed and the other has been partially completed. At a local level Essex Police has confirmed use of the reporting processes required by recommendation 2 and has also confirmed use of agreed procedure to respond to allegations of fraud, detailed in recommendation 9.

The Chief Constable has provided a detailed response to me regarding each of the recommendations relevant to Essex Police in the 2021 report. This assures me that the Force is doing what is required in regard to fraud-related calls for service as outlined in recommendation 1, and has committed to a detailed review to ensure compliance with the guidance referred to in recommendation 3. Essex Police is committed to further development in this area, with plans for a dedicated fraud SPOC, ongoing training and education, and proactively looking to identify areas where service could be improved.

It is disappointing to read your conclusion that 'too many victims still receive a poor service and are denied justice'. In my 2021 Manifesto I committed to continue to champion the rights of victims, and this extends to victims of all types of crime; fraud can have

devastating effects on individuals, and it is important that they are supported and that perpetrators are brought to justice.

Working to reduce the surge in fraud crime is a key priority in Essex, and as part of our commitment to this agenda it forms a priority in the proposed new Police and Crime Plan for Essex.

I will continue to monitor the work of Essex Police in this regard, and to hold the Chief Constable to account, including through the monthly Performance and Resources Scrutiny Board.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Roger Hirst', written in a cursive style.

Roger Hirst  
Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner

c.c. Ben-Julian Harrington, Chief Constable, Essex Police.

## **Appendix A – Recommendations**

### **Recommendation 1**

By 30 September 2021, chief constables should make sure that their forces are following the guidance issued by the National Police Chiefs' Council Coordinator for Economic Crime about fraud-related calls for service.

### **Recommendation 2**

By 31 March 2022, the National Police Chiefs' Council Coordinator for Economic Crime with the National Crime Agency, National Economic Crime Centre and City of London Police should set up an effective national tasking and co-ordination process for fraud.

### **Recommendation 3**

By 31 October 2021, chief constables should adopt the guidance issued in September 2019 by the National Police Chiefs' Council Coordinator for Economic Crime that was aimed at improving the information given to victims when reporting fraud.

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