

New Banking Protocol scheme prevents over £1.5m of fraud



Over £1.5million of fraud has been prevented by Police Scotland in the past five months as the force takes part in a new prevention scheme.

The Banking Protocol was introduced in March 2018 aimed at identifying and protecting potential fraud victims.

It means banking staff can immediately alert police if a person requests to withdraw or transfer a sum of money which appears unusual for them.

A number of arrests, including bogus workmen, have been made and around 250 emergency calls have been responded to through the scheme.

Detective Superintendent Kenny Thomson, of the Specialist Crime Division, said: "The Banking Protocol is a national scheme implemented to protect those who are vulnerable to financial crime.

“Police Scotland fully supports this scheme and will continue to work with partner agencies to protect the people in our society from financial crime. The results for the first 5 months of its operation highlight the impact of the scheme.”

The Banking Protocol has been developed as a partnership between the finance industry, police and Trading Standards.

If staff suspect the customer is potentially going to be a victim of fraud, they call 999 and there will be an immediate priority response to the branch by police. The new system means a priority response is guaranteed. This prevents the individual becoming a victim, potentially facilitates the arrest of a fraudster and ensures the customer receives prevention advice to reduce their risk of becoming a victim in the future. UK Finance, which represents the banking and financial services sector, said the joined-up approach was “crucial” to staying one step ahead.

Katy Worobec, Managing Director of Economic Crime at UK Finance, said: “Fraud can have a devastating impact on victims and is often targeted at the most vulnerable people in society, which is why we must work together to prevent it.

“The Banking Protocol shows how close cooperation between the industry and law enforcement can help to protect victims and crack down on fraudsters.

“This kind of joined-up approach is crucial to stay one step ahead and ensure that unscrupulous scammers preying on customers are brought to justice.”