

# **‘No cold calling’ zones to be expanded**

**Signs to ward off doorstep cold callers are preventing nearly £400,000 being lost to scammers, the council says.**

The city’s ‘no cold calling zones’ aim to reduce the number of people falling victim to rogue traders, bogus callers and all ‘doorstep crime’.

Since the measures were piloted in 2006 they have been rolled-out across 135 zones, some consisting of single streets and others covering multiple streets in a local area, which are designated when a majority of local residents indicate their support.

Councillors agreed to support the expansion of the scheme at a City Chambers meeting held on Monday (August 7).

Licensing standards officer Tom Veitch told the Regulatory Committee that the people most vulnerable to being scammed on their doorstep “are often elderly and live alone”.

He said: “Statistics show that the victims of doorstep crime are two and a half times more likely to require residential care or have died within a period of a year of an incident of doorstep crime.

“As well as the personal, emotional impact, in terms of the preventative financial value of no cold calling zones we estimate that to be just short of £400,000 a year.”

The council's estimation is based on an assumption that each zone prevents one doorstep crime incident per year, at an estimated cost of £2,952.

Mr Veitch highlighted the "importance" of community champions who act as a contact point and distribute questionnaires to residents, as it needs to be demonstrated that a majority of people within a 'zone' back the proposals before they are introduced.

"They are all about empowering residents but they also do require that buy-in from a resident to make that initial commitment," he said.

Once a new zone is established 'no cold caller zone' front door stickers are distributed locally and signs are attached to lampposts. The council says resident feedback is "very positive".

However Mr Veitch said it had proved "more difficult" to get the support needed to set up zones in tenements and shared door properties.

He said: "Whether it's HMOs or short-term lets, there tends to be that turnover of tenants as well which can make it quite difficult."

by Donald Turvill Local Democracy Reporter

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