

Member Briefing

Title: Scams Awareness Month

Summary: This briefing provides information about National Scams Awareness Month in May and how we will be highlighting the issue in Cheshire West and Chester.

Background

An issue often raised by Members is the concern they have about scams that may affect their local communities and residents. Members also request information that can be passed on to help keep their residents safe. This May is National Scams Awareness Month and Regulatory Services are joining in the national initiative to inform residents of Cheshire West about various scams, in order to raise awareness of the different forms they can take, and in turn to ensure our residents are safer. We would like Members to help promote this campaign to ensure we reach as many people as possible.

There is a scam for just about everyone and every situation. Some things that make our lives easier, such as the internet and smart phones, also provide opportunities for so-called scammers.

One of the key challenges for Trading Standards and other consumer organisations is that many people suffer in silence, with only 5% of scams being reported as people often feel shame or embarrassment at being caught out.

Scams Awareness Month is a great opportunity for Regulatory Services to advise people about spotting the signs of a scam and spreading the word as far as possible, to take that knowledge into the ongoing fight against scams.



One of the images from campaign initiative, included in the literature we are distributing.

Key Messages

These are the key messages for scam awareness month:

- If it sounds too good to be true it probably is
- If you haven't bought a ticket – you can't win it
- You shouldn't have to pay anything to get a prize
- Never give out your bank details unless you are absolutely certain you know you can trust the person you are giving them to
- Never send money to someone you don't know
- Your bank or the Police will never ask for your pin number
- If in doubt, don't reply. Bin it, delete it or hang up

We will be issuing a Cheshire West media release to highlight the issues and the various guises which these scams can take, sending regular twitter messages through the month and providing posters and postcards in the public areas of council buildings in Chester, Ellesmere Port and Winsford. Posters have also been distributed to Cheshire West libraries.

Further information

Copies of promotional materials being used are attached:

- Poster
- Phone scam booklet

If you require any material in hard copy form or any further information regarding the initiative please contact Gaynor Roberts – 01244 973751
gaynor.roberts@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk

For further information contact: Gaynor Roberts (see above)

Directorate: Localities

Responsible Committee, Board, Executive Member: Cllr Lynn Riley

Date: 6 May 2014

Background documents:

If you have any comments about this briefing note, about the Members' Briefing series, or if you would like to suggest a topic for a briefing note, please contact Rob Renouf, Policy Manager, Policy, Performance and Partnerships Service. Floor 3, HQ, 58 Nicholas Street, Chester. Telephone 01244 977261. e-mail rob.renouf@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk