Businesses are an integral part of our local communities. They bring employment and prosperity to the county. Yet crime costs Cheshire's business community millions of pounds each year.

This document summarises the Constabulary's main priorities – developed in partnership with business representatives from across the county – to reduce and prevent crime affecting the business community. You can read more about our strategy for working with the business community on our website at http://www.cheshire.police.uk/about-us/freedom-of-information/policies-procedures-and-strategies/

**Business crime in Cheshire**

Overall crime against businesses has fallen in recent years – and this remains the case in Cheshire. Many traditional forms of crime – theft by employees, for instance – have fallen. But businesses face new and emerging threats, in particularly the threat of cyber crime.

In Cheshire, we believe that the business community is at risk from the following types of crime, and working with business to tackle these are at the heart of the work of our economic crime team:

**Fraud and cyber crime**

Fraud and cyber crime is the biggest threat to businesses. Cyber crime alone is estimated to cost the UK economy £27 billion a year. Every business connected to the internet can expect to fall victim to cyber crime at some point, and criminals are becoming increasingly sophisticated in their ability to steal money or turn data into money.

**Threat from organised crime groups**

Businesses perceive that a significant number of crimes are being carried out by organised crime groups. The crimes most commonly perceived as organised were burglary and fraud.

**Cheshire's geographic location**

Cheshire is bordered by two large metropolitan areas. As such, Cheshire businesses face the threat of criminals who travel into our county to commit offences. We know, for instance, that this includes organised shoplifting that can have a significant impact on retailers.

We know that some businesses don't report crimes against them – especially those that may appear trivial, or where there is a lack of confidence in the Police's ability to bring offenders to justice.

We want to fully understand and address these concerns. It is also essential for us to have a full understanding of the extent of business crime in order that we can address the issues raised using the most appropriate and tactical options.

**Working with you to reduce and prevent crime**

Our economic crime team works with a range of organisations, business representatives and businesses themselves to reduce and prevent crime. We do this through the sharing of intelligence, understanding crime patterns to identify risks, carrying out crime prevention initiatives and achieving better outcomes through the criminal justice system.

At the heart of our plans are three aims. To make sure Cheshire's business community is:

- **Well informed** – with the most up to date information and prevention advice.
- **Well prepared** – with the right infrastructure to tackle the threat from business crime.
- **Well supported** – by Cheshire Police and other law enforcement agencies.

Our priorities

We will work with the business community on crime prevention: providing readily accessible, relevant information that helps businesses to protect themselves and build capacity to protect themselves.

We will prevent and deter individuals from committing crimes against business by working with other agencies to deter reoffending.

We will prosecute all offenders who commit business crime, or in cases where this is not appropriate, we will seek the most suitable criminal justice outcome.

We will increase business confidence in reporting crime by improving our response to all business crime, and specifically in the investigation of fraud and cyber crime.

We will increase our local response to business crime, working, for instance, with our local policing teams to identify vulnerable businesses or those that have been repeatedly targeted by criminals.

We will continue to work in partnership with other forces and agencies to tackle the threat of organised crime. We will build on existing partnerships and create new and innovative ways of working with our partners.

We will reduce crime against Cheshire's businesses by proactively using information and intelligence, including CCTV. We will ensure that police resources are allocated and tasked appropriately.

We will continue to be innovative, keeping up to date with technology, changes in criminal behaviour and crime threats. We will ensure that we have the capability to deal with all aspects of business crime, and particularly cybercrime.

**Measuring our success**

The Constabulary will use a range of measures to judge the success of the strategy as a whole, including:

- Overall level of recorded business crimes
- Number of recorded shoplifting offences
- Number of recorded business robbery offences
- Number of recorded commercial burglary offences

The strategy is intended to drive an increase in:

- The percentage of business crimes detected
- The percentage of shoplifting offences detected
- The percentage of business robbery offences detected
- The percentage of commercial burglary offences detected

*Biggest reduction in recorded shoplifting offences in the country (8%) – For the 12 months to June 2015 compared to June 2014 in Crime Statistics published by ONS in October 2015 (see infographic).