

Nottinghamshire Police and Crime Commissioner
Notice of Decision



Author:	Philip Gilbert
For Decision or Information	Decision
Date received*:	5 th January 2016
Ref*:	2016.006

TITLE: Purchase 'bundle' of SMS text messages for use with Neighbourhood Alert System to target Rural Crime

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

Rural crime has been identified as a priority for the Police and Crime Commissioner in his current refreshed Police and Crime Plan (2015-18). This pilot will use text message alerts (16,666 at a cost of £1k) as opposed to the conventional email alerts and will focus on:

1. Appeals to live incidents or incidents reported that day Arson, fuel and oil thefts, farm intruders, livestock, crimes involving agricultural vehicles and machinery and wildlife crime.
2. Community reassurance messages
3. Crime prevention advice

The pilot will be evaluated using satisfaction levels of users in the rural target areas and compared to the current baseline for conventional alerts.

INFORMATION IN SUPPORT OF DECISION: (e.g. report or business case)

Nottinghamshire Alert is a messaging system that allows Nottinghamshire Police, Neighbourhood Watch, Action Fraud, Trading Standards and other public organisations to distribute messages about community safety to members of the public quickly and efficiently. The system is designed to ensure members of the public can subscribe to receive messages ('alerts'), giving them complete control over what information they receive, how and how often they receive it and which organisations can send it to them.

Rural crime has been identified as a priority for the Police and Crime Commissioner in his current refreshed Police and Crime Plan (2015-18).

Some rural Neighbourhood Alert members have indicated that receiving large amounts of data via email alerts to their mobile devices is slow and difficult and they would rather receive alerts by text message as texts use significantly less data and could be accessed more quickly. For example, a farmer in a rural location using a mobile phone may not receive alerts in a timely enough way to allow them to react. **A text message would be easier to read and the recipient could react immediately by taking steps to protect their property and warn others in their area.**

The pilot will be evaluated against the following metrics for the Bassetlaw, Newark and Sherwood as described in the embedded proposal.




Rural Crime Text
 Alert Pilot Project - A1

FINANCIAL INFORMATION (please include if is it capital or revenue or both. What the split is and the totals being requested. Is this a virement/ something already budgeted for or something that requires additional funding. Are there any savings that can be offered up/or achieved)

Text messages to be sent via Neighbourhood Alert are purchased in advance in bundles. These messages are chargeable at six pence per text message with £1,000 (revenue) purchasing a bundle of 16,666 messages.

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Signature: 
 Chief Finance Officer

Date: 20th January
2016

Is any of the supporting information classified as non public or confidential information**?	Yes		No	✓
If yes, please state under which category number from the guidance**				

DECISION:

The Commissioner is requested to:

- Approve the £1k revenue funding for this pilot

OFFICER APPROVAL

I have been consulted about the proposal and confirm that the appropriate advice has been taken into account in the preparation of this report. I am satisfied that this is an appropriate request to be submitted to the Police and Crime Commissioner.

Signature:
 Chief Executive



Date: 26/1/16

DECLARATION:

I confirm that I do not have any disclosable pecuniary interests in this decision and I take the decision in compliance with the Code of Conduct for the Nottinghamshire Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner. Any interests are indicated below:

The above request has my approval.

Signature:



Date:

28/1/16

Nottinghamshire Police and Crime Commissioner

Neighbourhood Alert

Rural crime text messaging pilot: November 2015



Proposal summary

Nottinghamshire Alert is a messaging system that allows Nottinghamshire Police, Neighbourhood Watch, Action Fraud, Trading Standards and other public organisations to distribute messages about community safety to members of the public quickly and efficiently.

The system is designed to ensure members of the public can subscribe to receive messages ('alerts'), giving them complete control over what information they receive, how and how often they receive it and which organisations can send it to them.

At this time, Nottinghamshire Police can only send alerts by email as funding restrictions have prohibited the Force from sending text and voicemail messages to subscribers who want to receive information in this way.

Rural crime has been identified as a priority for the Police and Crime Commissioner in the refreshed Police and Crime Plan.

Rural crime text messaging alerts

Some rural Neighbourhood Alert members have indicated that receiving large amounts of data via email alerts to their mobile devices is slow and difficult and they would rather receive alerts by text message as texts use significantly less data and could be accessed more quickly.

For example, a farmer in a rural location using a mobile phone may not receive alerts in a timely enough way to allow them to react. A text message would be easier to read and the recipient could react immediately by taking steps to protect their property and warn others in their area.

Project outline

A core group of officers from the Bassetlaw, Newark and Sherwood area will be given administrator access to the Neighbourhood Alert system, allowing them to send alerts to all subscribers in this area.

The group will comprise officers from local neighbourhood policing teams, specialist wildlife crime officers and special constables targeting wildlife crime in the pilot area.

Their alerts will focus on:

- **Appeals to live incidents or incidents reported that day**
Arson, fuel and oil thefts, farm intruders, livestock, crimes involving agricultural vehicles and machinery and wildlife crime.

- **Community reassurance messages**
- **Crime prevention advice**

What the funding will buy

Text messages to be sent via Neighbourhood Alert are purchased in advance in bundles. These messages are chargeable at six pence per text message with £1,000 purchasing a bundle of 16,666 messages.

For clarity, the cost of sending a single alert to 100 subscribers will be £6.

Control measures

Measures taken to ensure the funding is used to maximum effect:

- User permissions will only give officers access to send alerts to the 3,409 subscribers currently registered to receive text message, email or voicemail alerts in the Bassetlaw, Newark and Sherwood area.

The recruitment of new subscribers will continue on a 'business as usual' basis during the pilot. Anyone interested will be able to subscribe by speaking to a local officer or by visiting the Nottinghamshire Alert website.

- Training will be provided to the designated officers to optimise how the text messages will be sent, ensuring that subscribers who prefer to receive alerts by text message only receive messages in this way. Likewise, those who prefer to receive information via email will continue to do so, helping to preserve the funding for those specifically wanting to receive text messages.
- All subscribers in the area will be invited to update their subscription details at the beginning of the trial.

Trial duration

As the targeted nature of Neighbourhood Alert allows administrators to send alerts to subscribers at beat level, it is not easy to define how long the initial bundle of text messages will last when used intermittently over three neighbourhood policing areas.

However, the nominated officers will receive training in how to use the system and will be advised to target their alerts based on whether it is more appropriate to send the alert to a small number of beat areas or the whole pilot region at large.

An indication of how long the bundle will last is provided in the appendices of this document, based on a 'worst case scenario' of administrators sending alerts to the whole pilot region rather than individual beat areas.

It is intended that the pilot will run for a three-month period or until the initial bundle of text messages expires, whichever is sooner.

Evaluation

The pilot will be evaluated against the following metrics for the Bassetlaw, Newark and Sherwood:

	BASELINES OCTOBER 2015
<p>ACTIVE SUBSCRIBERS All contactable subscribers within the Bassetlaw, Newark and Sherwood pilot area only</p>	<p>842 East Bassetlaw</p> <p>1,866 Newark and Sherwood</p> <p>681 West Bassetlaw</p> <p>TOTAL: 3,409</p>
<p>'HORSE WATCH' AND 'FARM WATCH' MEMBERS All contactable subscribers signed up to receive 'Horse Watch' and 'Farm Watch' messages on any platform in the pilot area only</p>	<p>72 East Bassetlaw</p> <p>114 Newark and Sherwood</p> <p>23 West Bassetlaw</p> <p>TOTAL: 209</p>
<p>ALERTS SENT Within pilot area only</p>	<p>–</p>
<p>AVERAGE USER SATISFACTION RATING by administrator (out of six) within pilot area only</p>	<p>5.65/6.00 Current average rating for all Alerts</p>
<p>PILOT DURATION</p>	<p>–</p>
<p>REPLIES RECEIVED Limited to pilot Alerts only</p>	<p>–</p>
<p>OPERATIONAL OUTCOMES Information and intelligence received and other positive news stories</p>	<p>–</p>

Contact information:

For more information, please contact: Richard Brown, Senior Digital Officer at Nottinghamshire Police, on 101 extension 800 2077 or email richard.brown12402@nottinghamshire.pnn.police.uk

Appendices: Indicative figures

Estimate of how long the text message bundle will last when used across three neighbourhood policing areas.

Note that alerts will be targeted to smaller beat areas that make up these three neighbourhood policing areas, helping to prolong the duration of the trial beyond the indications provided below:

	RECEIPIENTS		COST PER ALERT	DURATION		
	EMAIL	TEXT MESSAGE		ONE ALERTS PER WEEK	THREE ALERTS PER WEEK	FIVE ALERTS PER WEEK
East Bassetlaw	526	227	£13.62	73 weeks	24 weeks	14 weeks
Newark and Sherwood	727	1,061	£63.66	15 weeks	7 weeks	3 weeks
West Bassetlaw	168	436	£26.16	38 weeks	12 weeks	7 weeks
All Alert subscribers in Bassetlaw, Newark and Sherwood	1,421	1,724	£103.44	9 weeks	3 weeks	1 week
'Horse Watch' and 'Farm Watch' subscribers in Bassetlaw, Newark and Sherwood	185	41	£2.46	7+ years	2.6+ years	1.5+ years

FIGURES SHOW THE NUMBER OF ACTIVE REGISTERED USERS AS AT 11 NOVEMBER 2015 SUBSCRIBED TO RECEIVE ALERT MESSAGES CATEGORISED AS 'LOCAL NEWS'. FIGURES BASED ON THE SENDING OF MESSAGES BEING OPTIMISED SO THAT SUBSCRIBERS OPTING TO RECEIVE EMAIL.