

Money Wire Warning

Staffordshire Community Services are warning consumers to think twice before paying for goods or services online using money wire services such as those offered by Moneygram or Western Union.

These services are a useful way of sending money to friends or family overseas. However, they are also frequently the weapon of choice for scammers and con artists.

The warning follows the case of a Nuneaton-based man who paid out a total of over £1200 to African-based scammers for a puppy that never existed. The victim initially saw the puppy advertised for sale on a classified ads website.

After contacting the seller via the email address shown in advert, the buyer was persuaded that the puppy could be shipped to him from a UK address to his home. After initially wiring the seller £250, the buyer was persuaded to send further payments as 'problems' (including delivery errors, quarantine charges, administration costs) developed.

The seller claimed to be based in Newcastle under Lyme. However, their emails have been traced back to Cameroon in Africa. The sellers preyed upon their victim's naivety and their emotional attachment to a puppy shown in a photograph.

Officers advise never to send money to strangers using money wire services.

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