



Stop It! Campaign - Press Release

Monday 18th March 2024

Antisocial behaviour in Manchester city centre shops and leisure spaces must be reported say city leaders as new campaign launches to *Stop It!*

A new campaign *Stop It!* led by CityCo, Manchester City Centre Management Company and Manchester City Centre Business Improvement District (BID) and backed by Greater Manchester Police (GMP), Manchester City Council (MCC) and city centre businesses, aims to encourage staff in Manchester city centre to report anti-social behaviour.

Nationally, incidents of anti-social behaviour against service staff are massively increasing. The British Retail Consortium recent survey found that violence and abuse against shop workers nationally rose to 1,300 incidents a day in 2023 – double that of the previous year.

City leaders are working together to encourage businesses in Manchester city centre to take a zero-tolerance approach. The *Stop It!* campaign will help inform businesses how to report incidents and serve as a reminder to perpetrators that their behaviour is being reported.

The campaign, which will be rolled out across city centre businesses, shares examples of the issues real service workers face across all sectors and aims to tell perpetrators that their behaviour will not be tolerated in Manchester city centre.

Sacha Lord, Night-time Economy Adviser for Greater Manchester, says: *“This is a welcome campaign to bring helpful resources together and support teams. Hospitality staff work long and very often, anti-social hours. They are there to serve customers and make sure everyone has a great experience.*

“Please treat all staff the way you’d like to be treated and if you do have that ignorant mate, just tell them...Stop It!”

GMP is advising businesses to report all incidents of anti-social and criminal behaviour, this includes hate crime, threatening behaviour, abusive language, harassment, and damage to property. In emergencies, where there is a threat of harm, businesses should call the Police, dialling 999.

GMP, Superintendent Nicola Williams, says: *“GMP fully supports the Stop it! campaign and encourages businesses to make sure staff are aware of all the reporting tools available - calling 999, 101, or using our live chat or online reporting mechanisms.*

“Community safety and tackling neighbourhood crime are priorities for GMP. Our policing provision in the city centre has grown in recent months, we have more neighbourhood officers on the beat, and are expanding our Neighbourhood Crime Team.”

GMP works closely with Manchester City Council’s Anti-Social Behaviour Action Team (ASBAT) which has several powers to act against individuals committing anti-social behaviour. The team is striving to provide the best service to victims, with either criminal and or civil sanctions for those involved in anti-social behaviour, making the city a safer place for all.

Councillor Luthfur Rahman, Deputy Leader of Manchester City Council said: *“The Council is committed to working in partnership to tackle anti-social behaviour to ensure Manchester is a safe place for residents, people who work in the city and visitors.*

The Stop It! campaign is a great way of helping businesses understand how important it is to report incidents and work together to stop unwelcome behaviour.”

CityCo runs the award-winning Manchester Business Crime Reduction Partnership (BCRP). Members can report anti-social behaviour or verbal abuse to a secure intelligence network.

Vaughan Allen, Chief Executive of CityCo and Manchester City Centre BID, says: *“The rise in antisocial behaviour and aggression towards service staff is causing huge problems in our city centre. The people working in retail, hospitality, banking, and front-of-house are Mancunians – they are our family, our neighbours, our colleagues. They shouldn’t have to face abuse when just doing their jobs.*

“We want to assure service staff that reporting these issues is important; that it is taken seriously, that action can be taken against perpetrators, and that victims can be supported. We need people to Stop It!”

Incidents such as verbal abuse, physical attacks, disruption, and damage to property are common for many businesses. Miki Christi runs her own retail business the Manchester Shop, located in one of the city’s great institutions - Afflecks.

Miki says: “People think it is acceptable to haggle and then when you politely tell them it is not an option, some people get extremely aggressive with me.

“I set up the Manchester Shop in memory of my Mum and Grandma, strong Northern women who were proud of the city that they were from. It’s my love letter to Manchester. I am proud of what we do. We employ a small team, use local designers, and support the local economy.

“All we’re asking for is respect.”

City authorities want to assure business managers, staff, and customers that all reports of workplace crime and abuse are taken extremely seriously.

Businesses can find a guide of ‘how to report’ incidents, conflict awareness training, case studies and useful contacts at StopItMCR.com

Ends

Images: Miki Christi, Manchester Shop in Afflecks by Rebecca Lupton

Case studies are available on request.

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Notes to Editors

About CityCo

CityCo, The City Centre Management Company is a not-for-profit partnership dedicated to supporting the Manchester city centre business community. Our focus is on keeping the city centre welcoming, thriving and strong.

Through various networks, we bring together over 1500 companies. CityCo’s membership ranges from small independent venues to major investors and operators. We represent the needs of businesses with public partners such as Manchester City Council, Transport for Greater Manchester, Greater Manchester Police, Marketing Manchester, and many others.

We deliver the Manchester Business Crime Reduction Partnership, Manchester City Centre Business Improvement District and are partners in the Manchester Accommodation Business Improvement District.

We offer a range of business support services. We provide advice and help in planning new projects, link members, and ensure the city’s public agencies are aware of what the private sector needs to thrive.