

Greater Manchester Police: CityCo Members Zoom Meeting

10am, 24 April 2020

Headline Notes

Welcome to our business members from meeting host, CityCo Chief Exec Vaughan Allen.

Introduction to GMP Superintendent Chris Hill and City Centre Chief Inspector Zac Fraser, and Manchester City Council's Strategic Lead for Neighbourhoods, Andy Wilson.

Superintendent Chris Hill Introduction

GMP main priorities currently:

- **Policing the return to a 'new normality'**

GMP planning will be based on government advice. Uncertainty as to when businesses and retailers will reopen.

- **Night Time Economy**

GMP do not know what the return of the NTE looks like at the moment. Likely to be staggered openings and continued social distancing.

- **Homelessness**

GMP continue to work closely with the homeless community, service and charity partners.

Comment from Andy Wilson

Partners in the city centre have provided for all the needs of the most entrenched rough sleepers, including accommodation, meals and healthcare. There should be no reason for theft and begging for subsistence. The challenge will be how to ensure that those accommodated, during this public health emergency, do not revert to the streets and we have suitable "move on" options.

Vaughan Allen questions to Chief Inspector Zac Fraser

- **Has there been an increase in incidents around commercial property?**

GMP had expected a spike in burglaries but this has not happened. Burglaries have decreased by almost a half (25 in last 4 months, 13 arrested = high charge rate), providing opportunity for target hardening and more patrolling. Officer night shifts have been added leading to police 'coverage' across the city 24/7.

If businesses are finding they have had a break-in, please do report to the police, and let CityCo's Business Crime Unit know to allow for investigation and CCTV analysis. Post-policing is in operation to gather evidence which is helping to identify offenders and allow more in-depth crime prevention.

Businesses can expect more enhanced response around commercial property at this time due to dip in other demand, but it must be reported, even if there is a time lag. Regarding boarding up - this remains a business decision. GMP recommends securing fire escapes, rears and internal doors as priority as it slows the escape of offenders. Types of stock being targeted: alcohol, cigarettes, clothing, IT equipment.

- **How are you tackling anti-social behaviour in the city centre?**

Reported city centre ASB incidents are low and there are more issues in the suburbs.

Patrols are out every day and Operation Sycamore (GMP response to violent crime) is running. Plain clothes officers are in operation, CCTV and intelligence patrols.

- **As footfall has dropped, issues with some of the rough sleepers has become more evident with ASB and verbal abuse to retail staff. How are you tackling?**

The city's homelessness partnership and support work continue. As we know the issue is complex to do with alcohol, drug dependency, mental health, long term poverty and many rough sleepers are accustomed to living on the streets.

Support partnerships are all working in one direction to help assist. The offer to help rough sleepers currently includes access to accommodation, food, health, and welfare services. GMP have an active list of who is accommodated, who has been offered accommodation and support, and who has rejected for whatever reason.

Businesses can report repeat problematic issues to do with crime and ASB. There is potential for enforcement measures such as Crime Behaviour Orders.

GMP, MCC and partners are all working on 'wrap-around' exit plans for those in hotel accommodation.

- **Is the increased visible police presence in the city centre going to continue?**

GMP do not have more officers in operation - patrols are just more visible as incoming demand from other areas is lower. Open investigations have halved and therefore this is currently more time to patrol, investigate crimes and make more arrests.

Resourcing going forward is being looked at regarding reopening, major events etc. GMP are very used to dealing with mass gatherings.

- **How are you planning to manage continuing social distancing?**

Any plans will come from national decision making and those parameters. GMP will continue to Engage, Explain, Encourage and Enforce as required.

The police do not have a 'heads up' on national reopening plans. Social distancing strategy will be reactive and planned according to national advice.

GMP are looking at NTE economy plans based on various scenarios. Over the next two or three weeks, GMP will be linking with the businesses that open first and tailoring plans accordingly.

- **How are GMP intending to tackle retail crime as stores reopen?**

GMP has a retail crime strategy in place. This will be a targeted approach to target top repeat offenders, working alongside CityCo's Business Crime Unit. Problem-solving activity and more detailed investigations will be the focus.

GMP's Street Engagement Hub and team will be continuing to work on issues with the street community regarding low level crime.

- **What are GMP's plans around city-wide queue management that might be needed. Would you recommend working with private security?**

Up to now national head offices have set their own policies with regarding to queuing. GMP will be supporting businesses and sharing good practice and guidance.

Private security remains down to individual businesses.

- **As venues start to reopen will Martyn's Laws have an effect?**

Force HQ are working on this and there is no local guidance yet. GMP will share and work on recommendations as they come through. This will be an opportunity for a "First Thursday" business engagement event at CityCo when appropriate.

- **How are you engaging with the sex workers around Piccadilly?**

GMP continue to be in close liaison with street workers healthy charity MASH (Manchester Action on Street Health). There is a balance between safeguarding and displacement of vulnerable people. It is complex, but work is ongoing.

- **Any there any lessons from the last few weeks that GMP will be taking forward in terms of city centre policing in the longer term?**

Yes absolutely. This period has allowed various local plans to be expedited such as the Street Engagement Hub, change of night-time resources, change of shift patterns, use of patrols based on demand and retail crime strategy.

GMP will continue to use problem-orientated and evidence-based work to inform tactics.

Many thank to all for joining. If you have any feedback, please send to members@cityco.com